Encounter

November 1978 £1

Henry Kissinger
on

World Affairs

Mervyn Jones
Story

George Watson
Lucky Jim & after

François Bondy
Letter from Paris

Malcolm Bradbury
Abstractions

Ignazio Silone
A Last Visit

Tito... Aden... Hitler

Hyam Maccoby
On a Manna-Machine Built for Two

Edited by Melvin J. Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

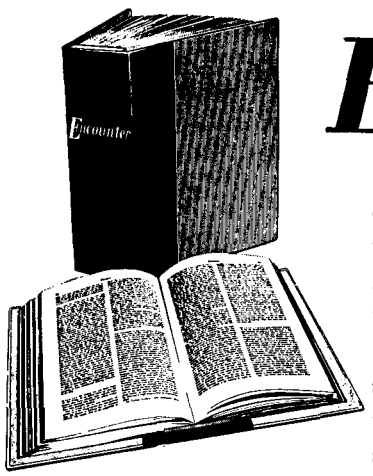
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Spectator Spectator Spectator

Politics... Current Affairs...
the City... Books... Art...
Theatre... Cinema... Music...
Television...Chess...

Weekly, 30p

Spectator Spectator Spectator



Encounter BINDER

The ENCOUNTER Easibinder enables readers, for half the cost of full binding, to preserve their copies in an attractive and durable format. Each copy of the magazine, as received, can be quickly inserted in the case and secured there. Copies can just as easily be removed.

The binder holds six copies. It is strongly made with stiff covers, bound in maroon and grey cloth, with the title of the magazine blocked in gold on the spine. Full assembly instructions are included with each binder.

The ENCOUNTER Easibinder costs £2.50 or $5.00, including the costs of packing and posting by surface mail to any address in the world. There is no trade discount.

ORDER BY COUPON OR SIMILAR LETTER

To **ENCOUNTER (Binder), 59 ST MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON WC2**
Please send.....ENCOUNTER Easibinder(s). I enclose cheque/P.O. for.....(£2.50 or $5.00 per binder)
NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
.....

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Encounter

NOVEMBER 1978
VOL. LI NO. 5

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* ANTHONY THWAITE
MANAGING EDITOR: *Margot Walmsley* ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Bryan Healing*
GENERAL MANAGER: *Anthony Robinson* ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: *John Hall*
ADVISORY BOARD: *Maurice Cranston, D. J. Enright, Anthony Hartley, Leo Labedz, Goronwy Rees, Edward Shils, John Weightman*
PUBLISHING ADVISERS: *Lord Ardwick, Blouke Carus, Lord Cudlipp, Cecil Harmsworth King, Leon Levy, Jack Watmough*

Per copy: UK £1.00: USA & Canada $2.00. Back numbers £1.50 ($3.00). Postage extra: 15p (25c)
Annual Subscriptions: UK & Europe £10.50: USA & Canada $21.00 surface, $26.00 by air: Elsewhere £12.00.
Binder for six copies: £2.50 ($5.00).
Address for all departments: Encounter Ltd., 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc., P.O. Box 1425, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. ©*1978 by Encounter Ltd.*
Manuscripts are returned only if accompanied by s.a.e. (English stamp or International Reply Coupons).

FIVE DAYS BY MOONLIGHT *(story)* 3 *Mervyn Jones*
WORLD AFFAIRS: AN INTERVIEW 9 *Henry Kissinger*
ON A MANNA-MACHINE BUILT FOR TWO 28 *Hyam Maccoby*

POEMS

Geoffrey Smith 25, *George MacBeth* 26, *Peter Porter* 27, *Peter Redgrove* 36, *Stewart Conn* 36, *Michael Burn* 73, *Frank Ormsby* 74, *David Rokeah* 74, *Geoffrey Holloway* 86

NOTES & TOPICS

WORLD WAR II STRATEGY 39 *Charles P. Kindleberger*
FICTIONS OF ACADEME 42 *George Watson*
A YEAR OF THE "NEW PHILOSOPHERS" 46 *François Bondy*

BOOKS & WRITERS

A DOG ENGULFED BY SAND (I) 51 *Malcolm Bradbury*
BRICKBATS & MORTAR 59 *Roger Scruton*
HEADS, TONGUES & SPIRITS 63 *Alan Brownjohn*
IMAGES OF THE INSTANT PAST 69 *Robert Melville*

EAST & WEST

TITO, AFTER 30 YEARS 75 *C. G. Strohm*

FILM

THE SHADOWS IN THE CAVE 78 *P. N. Furbank*

CONFERENCE

ARGUING ABOUT HITLER 82 *K. H. Janssen*

DISCUSSION

CAN EUROPE REALLY BE DEFENDED? 87 *Helmut Sonnenfeldt*

DOCUMENT

A LAST VISIT TO IGNAZIO SILONE 89 *Domenico Porzio*

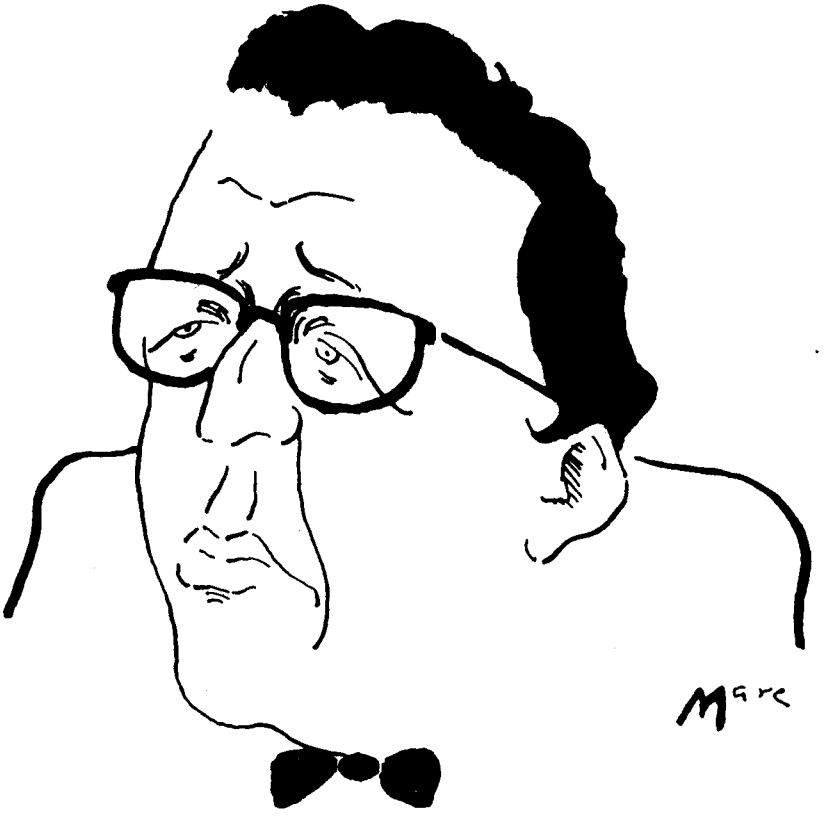
BOXES

Philosophers in Heidelberg: on the "Origins of Terrorism" (J.B.) 84
Polysyllabic Derogation (William F. Buckley) 94
Vogue Word Watch (William Safire) 95

LETTERS 92

AUTHORS 96

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Expert. Positive. Controversial.
And never never dull.

Bernard Levin on Drama.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mervyn Jones

Five Days by Moonlight

Monday

REACHING THE ENTRANCE to the Zoo at ten minutes past nine, he saw her car —a small Renault—already parked. It was usual for her to arrive first. His conception of courtesy ordained that a man should wait for a lady, not she for him; but he had to drive in from Barnet, and to leave home at an absurdly early time would have involved him in difficult explanations to his wife.

He parked his Jaguar and entered the Zoo, using the Society membership card which he had acquired when committed to this affair. The gatekeeper, who had come to know him well, would have been surprised to learn that his interest in animals was minimal. It was she who had, with what he considered to be a feminine admixture of timidity and guile, and also making a choice of a scene pleasant to her through familiarity, proposed that they should meet here. He walked briskly to the Charles Clore Pavilion for Mammals and descended the steps leading to the Moonlight World. She had explained to him that this subterranean arcade was devoted to nocturnal animals, and that the near-darkness was intended to deceive them into the belief that night, which they favoured for such activities as were available to them, began at the hour when the Zoo opened. A sign adjured him: "Go slowly to adjust your eyes to the dim light." But this precept he never obeyed. She was here, guarded for him by a secrecy which the promises of love turned into knowledge, just as the cleverly modulated light transformed day into night; she was waiting.

He found her near the cage of the short-headed flying phalanger. Its head was indeed rather squat, but she had remarked that she found the designation "short-headed" unnecessary to the point of being pejorative, for it did not appear that there was such a creature as a long-headed phalanger. It did on occasion fly, so far as the confines of its cage permitted, although whether this flight was more than a particularly agile leap neither he nor she had been able to decide. At present, it was apparently dormant. The day, or in phalangerial perception the night—at all events, the period of wakefulness—had begun only a quarter of an hour ago, and in the absence of any imperative responsibilities it was surely reasonable for a phalanger to prolong its rest. She had wondered, moreover, whether a phalanger—or for that matter a jird, a hutia or a casiragua—might not find something suspicious in an environment that varied with no lunar cycles and in which totally dark nights never occurred. To advance this problem invited conjecture concerning the intelligence, or at least the capacity for memory, of nocturnal animals.

Lovers, however, could only rejoice that it was always moonlight here; and it was hard to believe that, when the Zoo was closed to the public, the arcade was brilliantly illuminated. Yet such was the reality, and it had suggested to her one of those speculations that arose from time to time in her imaginative mind. She would like to know, she said, whether some ambitious keeper made use of its seclusion to study for an Open University degree, or conceivably to write a novel, undisturbed even by noises from the sleeping animals and benefiting from free electricity.

But he was averse to such discussions, in view of the desperately limited time that they could spend together. He admired the ingenuity with which she had devised so safe a meeting-place; and he was gratefully aware that no other man was able to caress the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

woman he loved on the way to his office, thus storing a pleasure that lingered through even the most demanding or frustrating day. Still, he grudged any attention diverted to the creatures which merely provided the locale and the background, so he at once embraced and kissed her.

She responded to the kiss, then withdrew her lips and rested her cheek against his. He had reflected on occasion, as one of the curious effects of this style of meeting, that he was able to offer her a freshly shaven cheek instead of the stubble with which other mistresses, not to speak of his wife, had been obliged to content themselves.

"How was your weekend?", she asked.

"All right", he said. "We went to the cottage."

Her hand, rustling his hair, halted momentarily before resuming its movement and he regretted the little word "we"—the reminder of another allegiance. They both had marriages so deeply rooted in habit, which time had soldered into loyalty, that a break was virtually impossible. Stated and accepted early in their love affair, this fact was nevertheless a constraint which they did not like to recall when they were together.

"I painted nearly all the time", she said. "It keeps me from thinking."

He wondered whether she meant that it kept her from thinking of the deception imposed on her husband, or that it kept her from vainly thinking of him. As though to resolve this doubt, she added: "I missed you all the time, though."

"I never stop missing you, darling", he said.

Tuesday

HOLDING HER IN HIS ARMS, and aware in his peripheral vision of the meticulously regulated movements of the slow loris, he toyed with the notion that through the accumulation of these meetings they had, in a sense, become nocturnal animals. They resembled these creatures, in the first place, in the prudent shyness with which they evaded notice even in the dim light which afforded welcome protection. They kept their voices at a pitch below the norm of the daytime world, for their murmurs could not be drowned by the noises of traffic and of aircraft which are the urban equivalent of the lion's roar or the elephant's trumpeting; indeed, they were more often than not silent, communicating their sentiments through the intuitions of contiguity. And of all the senses, sight was the least necessary to them. He savoured her attractions by means of hearing (sometimes words, but more intimately and delightfully the accelerated rhythm of her breathing and the throaty sound with which she expressed particular pleasure), by means of taste (a mingling of marmalade and coffee which he had learned to recognise on her lips), by means of smell (partly natural, partly the scent, delicate rather than pungent, which she considered suitable for this hour), and above all by means of touch (the fine strands of her hair, the cool smoothness of her skin, the fabric of dresses now familiar to his fingers rather than to his eyes). So great, by this time, was his reliance on the tactile that he had begun to forget such visual details as the precise colour of her eyes and the tint of her complexion. Much time had passed since he had last seen her exposed either to daylight or to electric light at the power lavished on an ordinary room, and in this time his love had only deepened.

At a certain point, these assignations had touched a chord of memory; and after some searching he had recalled other assignations belonging to a period which, despite its remoteness and its insignificance in the perspective of his life, retained a certain charm because it was the first time when he believed himself to be in love. He was then in the Lower Sixth of his public school and the girl was one of the domestic staff. They had met secretively, for she was afraid of dismissal and he of some possibly serious punishment. It was always dark, therefore, and sometimes they were fortunate enough to enjoy the romantic light of an early-rising moon. They had restrained themselves from the full satisfaction of desire, she from prudence or perhaps inherited moral inhibition, he from the lack of confidence caused by total inexperience. There was in any case the threat of interruption and discovery, as there was now in the Moonlight World; and he was thus repeating, so many years later, an exchange of affection no less real because it extended more to the emotional than to the physical sphere.

Moreover, as his trysting-time with the girl

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had been nine o'clock, so the hour for these rejuvenating encounters was also nine, or as soon after nine as circumstances allowed. Forgetting that to the outer world the hour was ante meridiem, they joined in that sweet fusion of ardour and contentment which for lovers is the reward of evening. When they parted, of course, the cherished illusion had to be discarded. But even then he rejoiced in his rare advantage of including two evenings within each span of twenty-four hours: one given in the customary manner to a dinner-party, the theatre or the television, and the other to an amatory interlude for which it was unnecessary to invent an alibi.

Making a pause in their absorption in each other, they stood hand in hand contemplating the slow loris. This animal was aptly named; it crept along the logs that furnished its cage at a pace which appeared to have been artificially reduced, like a television replay of an incident in a Test match. When lifting food to its mouth, it showed a similar lack of haste or eagerness. From time to time the loris and its mate—if that was their relationship—met, regarded each other pensively, and passed in the manner of neighbours whose paths cross in the course of shopping. She was hoping, she had said, to observe the slow loris in the act of love and to discover whether it was roused by desire from its habitual placidity. He had dissuaded her, however, from such an intrusion; if the loris made love slowly, he felt, that was its own concern rather than a subject for public curiosity, and it might well derive more enjoyment than, for example, the urgently impelled dog. Whether the character of the slow loris was shaped by a tentative and cautious outlook on life, or by a reflective and abstracted cast of mind, or by simple languor, was open to doubt. These pacific animals, in any case, supplied an appropriate background to a meeting such as theirs, in which a surrender to passionate excitement could scarcely (in the absence of even a bench) be rewarding, and might in the event of their being disturbed lead to grave embarrassment.

Wednesday

HE HAD BEEN WORRIED, at the time of his arrival, by not seeing the Renault. He had been lucky with the traffic lights, however, and it was only four minutes past nine; that he should reach the Moonlight World before her was not unprecedented, and he told himself that it made a pleasant change. But after descending the steps, he was quickly overcome by a feeling of desolation at being alone in a place so distinctively consecrated to her presence. He did not propose to miss a moment of her company by awaiting her, as she awaited him, in the farther recesses, and so he stationed himself close to the door. There, he glumly watched the hasty perambulations—whose restlessness mimicked his own mood—of the small-toothed palm civet, an animal which he was unable to regard with any degree of favour.

When he had flicked the illuminated panel of his digital watch on and off for the third time, and read the discouraging figure of 9.15, he began anxiously devising reasons for her lateness. She might have been detained by some domestic emergency, or by an inopportune telephone call; or trouble with the car (she praised its reliability, but he had no faith in cheap cars) might have exposed her to the delays of public transport. The pacing of the civet grated increasingly on his nerves, and it occurred to him that anyone coming through the door might suspect that he was keeping a rendezvous. He moved along the corridor until he reached the abode of an animal which, in moderation at least, he liked. With its appealing, somewhat puppy-like features, the kinkajou was at least amusing and could be called attractive. The cage, however, was almost filled by a dense network of the branches and twigs of trees, arranged—with a care and artistry which one could not fail to admire—to resemble the forests of South America wherein the kinkajou was at home. Patience and keen attention, therefore, were required if one wished to catch a glimpse of the animal when it did not choose to exhibit itself close to the glass. Twice he thought that he discerned its face amid the vegetation, but he could not be sure; and he waited for it to emerge with a concentration that, to some extent, diverted him from the infinitely more significant task of waiting for a unique and adorable human being.

The kinkajou did not reveal itself, and this bad omen—together with the passage of time, for it was now half past nine—forced him to the painful realisation that she too was

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unlikely to appear. She had never been so late before, nor had she ever failed to keep the assignation; he began to fear that her husband had by some means become cognisant of the affair. Another horrifying possibility was that she had been injured in an accident. He trembled at the thought, and struggled to persuade himself that, since her home was in Kentish Town, there was little risk of a serious accident in the short distance. But a bumping accident with its attendant tedious formalities, perhaps the intervention of the police; a mechanical mishap such as the blockage of the Renault's petrol feed-pipe, with which a woman of purely artistic and literary interests was ill-equipped to deal; for that matter, a puncture—any of these was only too easily imagined. He realised miserably that he would not know until tomorrow, and regretted that he had cautioned her not to telephone him at his office. She herself worked in a bookshop, but he had not troubled to learn its name.

He searched the other corridors in the faint hope that she had arrived while he was intent on the kinkajou, but it was no surprise to find himself still alone. Lighting a cigarette—an indulgence which in his agitated state he could not resist, although smoking was forbidden in the Moonlight World—he was startled by a sharp outburst of high-pitched chattering and looked up to confront a douloucouri. The name, which might have graced a family of Greek aristocrats, was inappropriate; the douloucouri was a monkey, in no way superior in dignity to the species which traditionally accompanied organ-grinders in their mendiance. Why it should be nocturnal, since simians were by nature inquisitive rather than retiring, it was not easy to imagine. It was staring at him in the shameless manner for which children in respectable families are rebuked. It had bulging eyes, whose dilation appeared to be as irresistibly provoked by curiosity as is that of the male sexual organ by concupiscence. In their regard there was also a malevolent or more exactly a derisive quality; and it seemed to him that, having on other occasions seen him happy in the possession of his beloved, the douloucouri was now enjoying the discomfiture caused by his enforced solitude. So potent and so disturbing was this impression that he moved hastily away and turned his attention to the inoffensive, if uninteresting, Brazilian tree porcupine. It was irrational, now that hope was virtually extinct, to linger here at all; yet he felt it to be a point of honour to remain until the time when he normally said his farewell to her.

It was ten o'clock, therefore, when he sadly ascended the steps. As he started up the Jaguar, he concentrated his mind staunchly on reviewing the appointments that lay ahead of him. They were, since he was keenly involved in his work, by no means without interest; yet nothing could compensate him for the melancholy experience of having, against all expectation, begun the day with a wasted evening.

Thursday

WHEN HE SAW HER—indeed, as soon as he saw the Renault—he was so relieved and delighted that he resolved not even to seek an explanation for his disappointment of the day before, much less to reproach her. She, however, took the first opportunity when her lips were free to say: "I'm dreadfully sorry about yesterday, darling. I had to keep Alexander home from school—he's got chickenpox."

He frowned, a reaction fortunately invisible in the Moonlight World. An allusion to one of her children was necessarily an allusion to her marriage, and hence to the established domain in which she spent most of her time and which he could never enter. He liked to think of her, so far as he could, as trammelled by no existence outside the retreat where, at the beginning and the end of this precious hour, he found her and left her.

"I'm glad you were able to come today", he said.

"I've left him with my mother. I phoned her right away, but she couldn't get over till the afternoon."

Sadly, they both knew that the lost meeting had made a rupture in their accustomed harmony. Although on the plane of logic he fully accepted the validity of her explanation, it was inherent in the lover's irrepressible demand for the loved one that she could not be quite forgiven. They did not speak again until, yielding to her wish, he had accompanied her to the cage of the fennec fox. This was her favourite among the nocturnal animals, and in her estimation the most

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intelligent; he had sometimes arrived to find her crouched before its cage at fox-eye level, for she believed that it recognised her and, in its silent fashion, greeted her. He dismissed this claim as an illusion created by its alert expression, but she argued that a dog was able to recognise regular visitors and there was no reason to suppose the talents of a fennec fox to be inferior. In his view, it was more probable that the fennec fox regarded all humans as an intriguing novelty. Not only was it nocturnal, but its home was the Arabian desert; and the annual total of people walking about the desert at night must surely be derisory.

However, a visit to the fennec fox prompted a train of thought with which he liked to dally. Its cage was large, and the décor of sand and stones was presumably an accurate replica of the desert. Thus, unlike the cages of forest animals which were (to his taste, if not to that of the animals concerned) displeasingly congested, it evoked visions of boundless space. For him, it engendered a mood in which he could imagine himself remote from his habitual surroundings—accompanied, needless to say, by the woman he loved.

He was led again to think of a scheme, which he had several times urged on her, whereby through an unbroken sequence of days and nights they could be together without any danger of being thwarted by mischance or by competing obligations. His idea was that they should go away together—or rather, since recognition at London Airport was too great a risk to run, that they should meet in some distant and unfrequented place. Given the right choice of destination, the project seemed to him feasible, and indeed it had more than one successful precedent. He made a couple of business trips every year, and in the past he had contrived without detection to be reunited in a discreet hotel with his mistress of the relevant period.

Now, he once more pressed her to consent to this enterprise. But she returned, with a gentle sigh just audible above the squeaks of the nearby Chinese hamster, the same answer as on previous occasions. Nothing would rejoice her more than to accede to his entreaties; but she had never, since her marriage, travelled without her husband and she could imagine no plausible excuse for doing so. Indeed, it was her husband's regular habits and taste for domestic routine that accounted for the brevity and the timing of their illicit encounters. As before, he could not rebut these inexorable arguments; and he knew that, although she would not say so in any wounding manner, she viewed his proposal as a fantasy reflecting more credit on the intensity of his love than on his sense of reality.

He dropped the subject, therefore, and they turned from verbal exchange to the simpler language of tactile pleasure. Kisses, the mutual relish of flesh and hair, and the ardent pressure of their vertical but nevertheless fondly intertwined bodies: these assurances of devotion were immune from disagreement or reservation.

Friday

ALWAYS, A SPECIAL poignancy attached itself to those meetings which must be followed by the separation of the weekend. It was precisely on Friday, however, that the precious time was likely to be reduced at the outset by a density of traffic caused by a heightened rhythm of commercial activity. So it proved today; he was delayed at every possible point of congestion and, when at last he hastened from the gate to the rendezvous, his watch showed 9.18.

She greeted him with more than her usual eagerness, evoked both by the chastening thought of the approaching separation and by the impatience which had mounted within her while she awaited him. Then she confided in him that life at present was not without its difficulties for her. The child, though of course his illness was minor, was bored and fretful. Her husband was in the sullen mood invariably induced by a visit from her mother. And her mother, who disliked getting up early, had commented critically on her insistence on leaving the house before nine when she was not due at the bookshop until ten; her explanation that she preferred to shop before the crowds had been met by the rejoinder that a need to shop every day indicated poor domestic management. This incident, which she found merely annoying, struck him as potentially menacing, for he had considerable respect for the perceptiveness of elderly women. One of his mistresses

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had remarked that she was more vigilantly observed, and therefore her infidelity was more likely to be detected, by her mother than by her husband.

On her, however, the effect of these irritations was to sharpen the joy afforded by her lover's consoling embrace and to generate an exceptional ardour. She began, indeed, to invite him to forms of physical intimacy which, though falling short of the luxuriances of the bedroom, recalled those on which he had ventured in his youth under the similarly reduced illumination of the back row of the cinema.

Reluctant to seem an unwilling partner, and tempted by her candid encouragement to a ready arousal, he was yet unable to dismiss the fear of interruption. His forebodings were justified; for, just as he was on the point of deciding that speed might compensate for recklessness, they were made abruptly aware that they were threatened by an observation by no means so impassive as that of the angwatibo or the long-nosed potoro.

Experience had taught him that, while the Zoo was little frequented before ten o'clock by the tardy English citizenry, tourists hailing from more energetic nations were inclined to make full use of time. The arcade now echoed to voices whose appreciation of the Moonlight World was expressed in the German language. He disengaged himself from her in sudden alarm. Although he disapproved of xenophobic prejudice, the unexpected sound of that harsh and commanding tongue revived memories of a childhood dominated by warnings of invasion and conquest. They fled, in automatic compliance with a procedure worked out at the initiation of these meetings, to the vicinity of a door labelled "Emergency Exit." They had, between them, a wide range of friends, including some without regular employment, and the possibility that one of these people might decide on an early visit to the Zoo, though slight, was not entirely to be discounted. They had not, however, been driven to making use of this means of escape; nor did they do so now, for the Germans were after all strangers. True, the mood of passion had been irretrievably dispelled, and any attempt at renewal—with the Germans evidently intent on a methodical tour of the arcade—would have been rash in the extreme; but more temperate kisses, with a watchful eye on the middle distance, were not impossible.

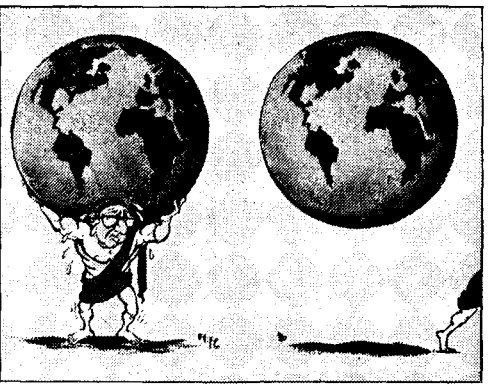
After a time, they were able to move a short distance to a cage which held for them a particular subtle charm. The background was tinted in dark blue, suggesting the night skies of the Mediterranean which have long been regarded as the ideal setting for romantic love. The effect sought by the designer, however, was probably Oriental, for the cage was inhabited by Indian fruit bats. Perfectly motionless—and always motionless, so far as he or she had ever observed—these extraordinary creatures hung from the ceiling, providing an image of unutterable calm and implying the transience of all human sufferings or frustrations.

All too soon, a covert but inevitable consultation of his watch told him that it was almost ten o'clock. The Germans had gone, and a blessed silence hallowed their last kisses; but, as on every Friday, the parting was painful. She wished to cling to him until he reached the door, but he was unwilling to say his farewell in the neighbourhood of the restless and distracting civet. In obedience to his plea, therefore, she remained where they had stood while they exchanged fervent assurances of the constancy of their love. So, as he prepared himself to endure the dreary days without her, his memories were of her pale profile framed against a background of dark blue and of the transcendent patience of the Indian fruit bats.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dr Kissinger on World Affairs

An Interview



DR KISSINGER, *in the world at large and in the USA itself there is a certain feeling of dissatisfaction with America's leadership. You yourself have now been out of office for 18 months. How does it feel to be a man of whom many people inside and outside America are saying this would never have happened in his time, this would never have happened when Henry Kissinger was in office?*

KISSINGER: In fairness one has to say that the new administration was not elected necessarily to carry out the policies that I would have carried out. So I think it is correct to say that certain matters would have been handled differently in terms of style and maybe in terms of substance. But then there was, after all, a change in administration.

—You have always been careful not to criticise the present government, except very discreetly. What would be your recommendations to the Presidency to improve its success at home and abroad?

KISSINGER: First, let me explain the basic position that I have adopted. I had to contribute to the conduct of foreign policy for eight years, under conditions of near civil war. When I now go through the documents for my book, I realise how anaesthetised we were at that time and how we almost took this constant result for granted.

I formed the very strong opinion at that time that what the top leadership of the country needs is an atmosphere in which its motives are not constantly challenged and in which it knows that those who have an influence on public opinion are not just waiting for an excuse to create a "credibility gap."

Therefore, I have been very careful not to make criticisms on essentially tactical issues and to give the administration the sense that, on those items on which I agree, I will even give it public support.

—As you did in the case of the Panama Canal agreement.

KISSINGER: Yes. When I do criticise or when I do state a different opinion, I want it clearly understood by our public that this is not an attempt to regain lost power or to undermine the confidence of the public in our Government, which I really think is one of the biggest problems of our period.

And this I think has to be understood both for this conversation and for my general public attitude.

—Accepting that, what policy changes would you recommend to the Carter government?

KISSINGER: I think what is essential to be done is that there is a clearly articulated concept of American foreign policy which everybody can understand and towards which other nations and our own public can orient themselves.

I think it is not possible to go on indefinitely with these fluctuations which are identified as a contest between this or that personality . . .

—Brzezinski or Young . . .

KISSINGER: . . . within the administration, so that in the period of four weeks you can get very tough talk about the Soviet role in Africa

THIS is the first publication in English of the long conversation in Washington between Henry Kissinger and a group of "Spiegel" editors, including Rudolf Augstein. Dr Kissinger has kindly gone over the transcript which was originally conducted in several languages.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the Cuban role in Angola, and then the sending of a political envoy to Angola, and each of these contradictory actions will be ascribed to the "victory" of a different adviser.

This I would say is the fundamental requirement of our foreign policy. Whether I would then agree with the results is, to be sure, a different issue.

YOU SAID ONLY *recently that the President, every President, must lead rather than simply put suggestions forward and then let them drop again.*

KISSINGER: I do not say that the President does not lead. I do not contest his proposition that he makes the final decision. But foreign policy is not simply making final decisions on individual cases. Foreign policy is also establishing the relationship between individual cases and developing a sense of nuance among them.

> ***"The President does not himself have to generate a public debate within his administration in order to teach the public that there are many different points of view...."***

The President has said that he deliberately permits each of his chief advisers, or many of his chief advisers, to articulate different policies so that the public understands what the various issues are.

That is what I question. I think he has an obligation to explain what the different points of view may be; but in a democracy, the different points of view emerge anyway. There would be enough Republicans who would give a different point of view, and for that matter enough Democrats. The President does not himself have to generate a public debate within his administration in order to teach the public that there are many different points of view.

What is expected of a President is to define clearly what the national purpose is, what the policies are, and to defend this against the inevitable criticisms that a pluralistic society tends to generate.

—The differing point of view of the Republicans was made very plain to him in May in the 29-page attack of all 38 Republican Senators on the President and his foreign policy, in which they stated: "After 15 short months of incoherence, inconsistency and slovenliness, our foreign policy and the aims of national security are in confusion; everywhere in the world we are being confronted with Soviet presumptuousness."

For eight years you were security adviser and foreign minister to two Republican presidents. Do you agree with this damning condemnation from the Republican faction of the Senate?

KISSINGER: Let me say two things. I did not work on this document. I have established the firm principle that I will not work on "joint documents." If I have something to say, I will say it in my own name, but not together with a group of others.

Secondly, it is in the logic of the democratic political process (and especially of a pluralistic society such as ours) that points of view contrary to that of whatever administration is in office will emerge; and what you have read is a fair statement of what many Republicans believe.

—But you yourself, Dr Kissinger, have criticised the Cuba policy of the administration; in the matter of Euro-Communism you are much stricter, very much stricter than the Carter administration; and on the question of human rights you harbour the fear that this policy is affecting the weaker, smaller allies of the USA more than the strong and powerful opponent in Moscow.

KISSINGER: That is correct. I have not agreed with all the elements of our African policy. I think, for one thing, that there is a certain confusion when one first criticises Cuba for having engineered the invasion from Angola and then sends a diplomat to Luanda within three weeks of making these accusations. I myself would not have recommended that. And I am convinced that we have polarised the situation in Rhodesia by our indifference, amounting to opposition to the so-called internal solution. So it is true that on African policy I have expressed my doubts.

On human rights, I agree with the objective. But the problem in foreign policy is not simply to state an objective but to be able to carry it out over an extended period of time in such a manner that it enhances the impression of other countries that one knows how to achieve one's objective. Otherwise even the noblest goal can wind up creating an impression of impotence.

—Those contradictions you were just speaking of make the foreign policy of the present administration a mystery to many people. Critics see no concept behind the initiatives and decisions. Do you see one?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KISSINGER: I think one has to keep in mind a number of aspects here. As a general proposition the Republican Party has perhaps had fewer experts on foreign policy; but, therefore, when it has been in office it has been able to concentrate power in fewer hands. . .

—. . . on Nixon and Kissinger or, later, on just Kissinger.

KISSINGER: . . . but also Dulles and Eisenhower. In any case, it has stood for less diffused concepts. The Democratic Party, on the other hand has many centres of power, many different views on the nature of foreign policy, and the differences between Senator McGovern and Security Adviser Brzezinski, for example, or between UN Ambassador Young and the more conservative Democrats in the Senate, are very substantial.

So that a Democratic President almost invariably is faced with various claims to a role in foreign policy, and in attempting to meet them all or to reconcile them there is the possibility that the impression is created of a more diffused foreign policy. If you look at the early Kennedy period, I think you will find the same symptoms you find now. I think there *is* a concept, I think the President has some rather clear ideas of what he wants. The problem is, in foreign policy, how you get from here to there, and this is where most of the disagreements are.

> ***". . .The problem in foreign policy is not simply to state an objective but to be able to carry it out over an extended period of time in such a manner that it enhances the impression that one knows how to achieve one's objective. Otherwise even the noblest goal can wind up creating an impression of impotence. . . . The problem is how you get from here to there. . . ."***

IT WOULD *interest us as Europeans whether you consider the President acted correctly over the question of the neutron bomb.*

KISSINGER: No, on that I would have disagreed with the President.

—So you would have approved the building and mounting of the neutron bomb?

KISSINGER: With all respect, this is the wrong question. Basically I think the "neutron bomb" is not a wonder weapon, and fundamentally its objectives can be achieved with many other weapons.

—We are quite aware of that.

KISSINGER: Therefore, I think the neutron bomb should have been handled as a technical issue to be decided essentially by technicians. I do not understand the moral issue that is raised by a bomb whose radiation damage is less than that of any Soviet weapon now in the Soviet arsenal, and the only "advantage" that the Soviet weapons have is that, in addition to having more radiation, they also have enormously more explosive power. And why to be incinerated in addition to being radiated is a moral advantage eludes me. But this may be a kind of moral blind-spot. I just do not understand the moral issue involved in the neutron bomb at all.

Secondly, I do not think the neutron bomb is all that important a weapon.

Thirdly, I think that if we are custodians (or if we think we are) of the nuclear future of the Alliance—then we have to be willing to make the final decisions regarding the most appropriate type of weapon and not ask our Allies to make them for us.

And, fourth, I cannot accept the proposition that the Soviet Union can intervene in the matter of what warheads we build—when any attempt by us to make the slightest proposal with respect to the warheads they put on their weapons would be mockingly rejected.

So, for all these reasons, I do not think the neutron bomb was worth making that big an issue about on either side of the Atlantic.

—What would you have done?

KISSINGER: I would have either put it into the arsenal or routinely deferred it—almost certainly the former. Now I am afraid that the Soviets may learn from this that they can intervene in the deployment of all other weapons.

—We see what you mean. The Soviets could get the impression—and this is also true for the one-sided American renunciation of the building of the B-1 bomber and the announcement that America will withdraw its troops from South Korea—that they are receiving concessions without having to offer anything in return. Would you have insisted on reciprocal concessions?

KISSINGER: Let's not discuss what I would or would not have done. I would say that, as a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

general rule, the Soviet Union does not pay for services that have already been rendered.

—You don't think Brezhnev can just go into the Politburo and say: We've just heard the neutron bomb will not be built, now we've got to offer something in return? You think that's an illusion?

KISSINGER: Not after it is completed.

HAVE THE RUSSIANS *got a stronger foothold in Africa than you would have believed possible five years ago?*

KISSINGER: Yes; and that, I have to say in fairness, already started when I was in office.

—There are several different interpretations of how the Russians have made such headway in Africa. It began, as you say, while you were still in office, and I'm sure you must have asked the Russians for an explanation. What did they reply to you?

KISSINGER: The Soviets claimed that they were only responding to African requests. But we were less concerned with Soviet explanations than with their actions. My concern was to stop this first major Soviet adventure in Africa in 15 years.

Of course one will never be able to prove these things, and I eventually will write about them in some detail. But, fundamentally, the dividing line began to be crossed in 1975 in two ways.

> ***". . . You pay for your actions in politics sooner or later. The trouble is you don't usually pay immediately and, therefore, when it happens, people no longer remember what the cause was."***

When the civil war in Angola started between the three factions of Neto, Roberto, and Savimbi, it was like many other African civil wars, in the outcome of which one could have a preference, but one did not need to make it a matter of super-power policies. For example, we accepted the victory of the Frelimo in Mozambique because we concluded that it had been achieved essentially by indigenous efforts with some reasonable outside support.

But in 1975 we found that between April and June something like $200 million worth of Soviet equipment was introduced on the side of Neto, which was more military equipment than all the rest of the world gave to all the rest of Africa put together.

So, therefore, what the Soviet Union has been doing is, for the first time, massively introducing military equipment and starting a cycle of upheavals similar to the impact of their first introduction of military equipment into the Middle East, into Egypt, in 1954, which led to over 20 years of constantly growing tension.

At this point, we sought to stop this by assisting the Black forces that were resisting the takeover. When we did this, the Soviets escalated yet another level by introducing Cubans.

—And you were as surprised by that as the rest of the world.

KISSINGER: Yes. By both of these developments; we did not expect either. At that point, by a variety of means, we were in my view on the verge of stopping even that second escalation when the Congress cut off any means of support.

Had we succeeded in Angola, there would have been no Ethiopia. The situation in southern Africa would today be entirely different, and I think this was one of the decisive watersheds.

ONE GETS THE IMPRESSION *today that you saw your system of the mutual responsibility of the two super-powers on the razor's edge. Your criticism of the Soviet Union became stronger than we had come to expect from you. . . .*

KISSINGER: I think there were a variety of reasons for these actions. One was that you pay for your actions in politics sooner or later. The trouble is you don't usually pay immediately and, therefore, when it happens, people no longer remember what the cause was.

We concluded the Viet Nam War under near civil-war conditions, we went through Watergate, and everybody was saying, "Look, it doesn't affect the conduct of foreign policy at all." But sooner or later, however, the erosion of executive authority reaches a point where somebody tries to test you. You cannot prove what that exact reason was; but this erosion is certainly, in my view, a contributing cause.

The second is that precisely because of the erosion of executive authority a number of the agreements we have made with the Soviet Union, such as the trade agreement, could not be implemented. . . .

—. . . because Congress intervened and made the trade agreement dependent on freedom of emigration for Soviet Jews and in addition reduced the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

credit limit to a ridiculous 75 million dollars, almost to a pittance.

KISSINGER: That is right; and the Vladivostok Agreement could also not be realised as rapidly as possible. So one of our basic thoughts—that we could, through actions of mutual restraint, create inhibitions to Soviet manoeuvres of this kind—had been removed.

Therefore, we lost both the capacity to create incentives for responsible behaviour and the capacity to create penalties for irresponsible behaviour—both as a result of the decline of executive authority. I think this was the reason why the Soviets made their attempts in Angola in 1975.

—But the loss of authority in the government. . . .

KISSINGER: Although I would also say the Soviets were probably surprised by our Congress' reaction in preventing our counter-move. I think until then the Soviets were prepared for a withdrawal. That was my strong impression in all my dealings with the Soviets.

—So you think the Soviets suddenly saw that local conditions were favourable to them, and it is not a question of a geographical offensive planned over a long period?

KISSINGER: No, I don't think when it started it was intended this way. I think when the Soviets started in Angola, they went further than they normally had but still within limits that would have been containable.

—And Congress is to blame for not stopping them?

KISSINGER: Well, the Congress and the way we were playing with our domestic authority for almost a decade.

ISN'T IT TRUE *that Congress—understandably at that time—wanted to avoid anything that might have led to another Viet Nam? And weren't there reasons for the internal loss of authority?*

KISSINGER: Of course, it is understandable; but in Angola there was no chance whatever of there being a new Viet Nam. In fact, it is very important to understand the essence of a problem. There was no intention of sending American troops to Angola under any circumstances; there was no possibility of anybody introducing 500,000 troops into Angola. In fact, it was the Russians through the Cubans who were in our position, that is to say, in the position we were in in Viet Nam. We were backing the local population against foreign invaders or at least against foreigners.

—But couldn't you make that clear to Congress?

KISSINGER: Well, at that point, I don't think the Congress was eager to listen to this sort of argument. But, again, I would have to say you cannot understand this entirely in terms of 1975. You have to go back to the systematic undermining of executive authority that started in 1967, to the domestic debate that resulted from the Viet Nam War and created such profound divisions—whoever's fault it was—that over a period of time it weakened the executive authority of the President.

—Do you accept the Cuban claim that it was their own idea to intervene in Africa?

KISSINGER: I think that is possible but not probable. I am sure there are a lot of Caribbean islands that have a dream of global significance. But without Soviet logistics, transportation, and subvention, the Cubans could not have implemented it.

—According to the latest American estimates, Cuba is costing the Soviets more than six million dollars daily in economic and military aid this year.

KISSINGER: I don't doubt that for Castro it is a much more exciting life to be a world figure than to be the president of a "Caribbean Switzerland", which is the best he can achieve if he sticks to his own knitting.

—If someone had come into your office five years ago and said: "Mr Secretary, we must keep a close watch on what the Cubans will do in Africa", would you have listened to him?

KISSINGER: No, I would have removed him from my foreign policy staff.

—Recently you said: "I simply cannot believe that Cuba, a country with nine million inhabitants, is engaged in world politics and that the greatest industrial state on earth, the USA, can find no way of preventing this. I simply cannot believe it."

KISSINGER: I cannot accept the myth of the invincible Cuban.

—Why then is it that America cannot get rid of Cuban interference in Africa?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KISSINGER: Because there is no consensus of its significance. You have, for example, the views of our Ambassador to the United Nations . . .

—Mr Andrew Young. . .

KISSINGER: . . . who does not believe that the Cuban intervention in Africa is of any geopolitical significance.

—He even says that the presence of the Cubans in Africa has had a stabilising effect.

KISSINGER: At first he said it had a stabilising influence, and on other occasions he has said that one also has to inquire into who really supports the opponents of Neto in Angola . . .

—By which he meant the South Africans . . .

KISSINGER: . . . and then he says he does not consider what has happened in the Horn of Africa to be of geopolitical significance.

—Yes, he said: "When the Cubans suddenly sent troops into the Ogaden Horn Province, we took up this emotional position and decided that these thousand miles of sand were of enormous strategic importance. That is ridiculous."

KISSINGER: If you don't believe it is of geopolitical significance, then you have no need to stop it. So, it is not a problem of means; it is a problem of thought, and I happen to believe that the appearance—the fact that one is told that we must do certain things, otherwise the Cubans will intervene—could be interpreted by other nations as a sign of American impotence.

DO YOU HAVE SUFFICIENT *information to form a judgment on whether Cuba and Russia really did support the Shaba invasion or not? Castro denies it vehemently.*

KISSINGER: I have no information whatever whether Cubans actually marched into Shaba but I will say two things, which I keep repeating.

In foreign policy it is important to understand the essence of the problem. The invasion of the Shaba Province occurred by means of the Katanga gendarmes. The Katanga gendarmes have lived where they are now in the northern part of Angola for 12 years. In that whole time they never invaded Zaire. After the Cubans appeared, there have been two invasions in a period of 13 months. It would be the strangest kind of coincidence if there were not some connection between these events.

Secondly, how would people react if an American President said about a country where we have 20,000 troops either that we didn't know that there was the planning of an invasion of a neighbouring country—which is what Castro sometimes claims—or that he did know but was unable to dissuade these people from the invasion?

—Washington's arguments in the Caribbean are sometimes much the same. . . .

KISSINGER: I think if this happened to an American President who has 20,000 troops in another country . . .

—. . . then there would have been a further loss of confidence in the government . . .

KISSINGER: . . . the assault by our media on the grounds of "credibility" would be unbelievable. So I have not even asked our government to let me see the intelligence reports on which they based their judgment; it is inherent in the situation that there must be a connection between the Cuban presence and that invasion, and if there is no connection—well, if you put a loose cannon on a deck, you cannot then say you are not responsible when it starts rolling because you didn't predict the particular wave which caused it to roll.

—Was the sending in of French and Belgian paratroopers a reasonable reaction in your eyes?

KISSINGER: Yes, and I think we owe France a great debt of gratitude for doing that.

WERE YOU WRONGLY *interpreted or quoted when you were attributed as saying at the beginning of April, that the intervention of the Soviets in Africa is comparable with the expansionist policy of Hitler's Germany?*

KISSINGER: No, I have not said that. The Nazis and Communists are totally different phenomena. What I have said is: any nation has to make a choice between being psychologically certain and paying a heavy price if it turns out to be wrong, or being psychologically uncertain and paying a low price for taking the necessary precautions. My point is that it would have been relatively easy to stop Hitler in 1936. . . .

—After the occupation of the Rhineland?

KISSINGER: Yes, but people would still debate today whether he was a misunderstood nationalist

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or a maniac bent on world domination. By 1941, everybody knew who Hitler was; and it was knowledge for which one had to pay 20 million lives.

Similarly, in Africa, in 1975 it was relatively easy to stop the Cubans and the Soviets in Angola. Each successive event will cost more; only in this sense do I compare the problem. I do not think that Soviet strategy is comparable to Nazi strategy. The Soviets are much more patient; they are much less geared to one individual; and I don't even believe that the Soviets have a clear-cut over-all strategy.

—What do they have?

KISSINGER: I think they have a strategy designed to accumulate strength and a conviction that this strength will sooner or later be translatable into some geopolitical position; but they do not have a fixed plan. Soviet actions are not the result of a fixed plan, but the result of an accumulation of opportunities.

> ***"...The nature of these problems is that you cannot prove anything until the worst has happened, and by then it will be too late to do something about it."***

On the other hand, one cannot look at what has happened in Afghanistan, Aden, Ethiopia, and Angola and draw a line between these various countries without coming to certain geo-political conclusions.

—Geopolitically then, that means that Saudi Arabia, the richest oil country and best friend to the West, is situated in the middle of an area of unrest that can be influenced by the Communists?

KISSINGER: I would say that this appears to be the result of this policy. I am not saying this is the design.

—Does the Cuban and Russian activity in Africa present a real threat in your eyes? Will the end result be that the military and political balance will tip in favour of the Soviets?

KISSINGER: Again, the nature of these problems is that you cannot prove it until the worst has happened, and by then it will be too late to do something about it. From my conversations with people in the Middle East, I know that they are judging our reaction in a rather gloomy way.

Now, at what point the impression is created that this represents an inexorable wave—and thereby starts a series of events that nobody has planned and that nobody can then control—that I cannot predict. But I believe that such a point exists. I find it hard, however, to believe that the Soviet Union would put $1 billion worth of arms and another 20,000 troops into a country —as they did in Ethiopia right across the Straits from Saudi Arabia—without promising itself something more than maintaining the borders of Ethiopia. . . .

— . . . which has meanwhile become the most heavily armed African state through the Soviet supply of arms.

KISSINGER: And after all, we have to look at what happened in Afghanistan, contested for over a century. The British considered it important enough to fight innumerable wars on that frontier because they thought that the possession of Afghanistan had some influence on the security of the Indian sub-continent. Afghanistan was 80% in the Soviet sphere of influence to begin with. We were not engaged in a very active foreign policy there; and yet we have seen that a government has been established there entirely composed of Communists, and that even that limited balance which existed has now been overthrown. That cannot be an accident.

DOES ALL THIS MEAN *that the policy of* détente *is in a state of crisis from which it will be difficult to extricate it?*

KISSINGER: Yes, there is a crisis of *détente*. But it is not insoluble, which, for that matter, has been pointed out both by our President and by the Secretary of State. I think it is possible to solve it; but it will not solve itself.

—What message must one give the Russians to bring about a different situation in Africa?

KISSINGER: That it isn't possible to have both *Détente* and Expansion.

—But the Russians have said, and not for the first time, that for them détente *means on the one hand more or less the end of the arms race in the atomic sector, but at the same time continued support of the so-called progressive forces in the countries of the Third World.*

KISSINGER: That, as a general principle, is certainly what they have said; but the extent to which that is applied, after all, makes a difference.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It makes a difference whether you give some modest support to the Frelimo, which they did in Mozambique, or whether you send $1 billion worth of arms by a forced-draft airlift into Ethiopia.

It makes a difference whether you give some philosophical encouragement to so-called liberation movements (as we give philosophical encouragement to other groups), or whether you send in 20,000 Cuban troops. All of this makes an enormous difference.

And this precise difference will determine whether *détente* will lead to a real relaxation of tension, or whether it is a cover for Soviet expansionism.

—In any case, it seems that the word "détente" *has once more been banished—as it was once by Gerald Ford—from the vocabulary of the West.*

KISSINGER: Unfortunately, *détente* became a political issue in the United States, partly as a result of the facts that I described earlier, paradoxically enough by the very people who used to accuse our administration of being "too tough." The fact of a *détente* policy shouldn't be disputed. Its content should be disputed.

> ***"...To navigate between the extremes is an art of statesmanship: not to say you are for or against* détente, *or that you are for or against the Cold War."***

I think every Western government has an obligation to demonstrate to its people that it is making a serious effort to avoid the dangers of war. If it does not do this, it will wind up with all the domestic divisions of the Viet Nam crisis.

On the other hand, one must also be sure that peace does not become the only objective because, if it becomes the only objective, it will lead to blackmail. To navigate between these extremes is the art of statesmanship; not to say you are for or against *détente*, or that you are for or against the Cold War.

—Can we still speak of détente *at all at the moment?*

KISSINGER: I think right now there is no clear-cut concept of East-West relations on either side.

—How would you then define the present situation? As a belligerent peace?

KISSINGER: At the moment, we have a tendency to play situations entirely tactically, both on the *détente* side and on the conflict side; and there is no coherent pattern that is, at this moment, emerging.

—Your successor in the office of security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, recently accused the Russians of damaging the code of détente. *But nobody has ever defined together with the Russians what form this code could take, not even you or President Nixon.*

KISSINGER: Well, that is not exactly true. We signed and published a declaration of principles and a treaty for the prevention of nuclear war, both of which required either side to refrain from seeking a unilateral advantage. Both spoke of consultations regarding matters that might threaten the peace. With good will, these clauses could have been interpreted in the right way. So I think it is possible, through a combination of firmness and flexibility, to re-establish the code of conduct; but it requires both. It cannot be done with rhetoric.

—Has détente *already survived similar crises?*

KISSINGER: I would think that going to Moscow in 1972—after having mined Haiphong and while we were bombing Viet Nam—was not a minor matter. As far as the Middle East was concerned, it was our judgment that we were in a stronger position there than the Soviet Union was. Of course, the Soviet Union was not doing everything we would have wanted. Still, we were generally quite confident about being able to manage the crises in the Middle East.

—Ever since the beginning of détente, *both sides have continued to build up their armaments. One could go as far as to say, paradoxically, there has to be armament in order for there to be* détente.

KISSINGER: But the opposite would not be true: that, therefore, in the absence of *détente* you would have less armaments. In the absence of *détente*, you would have even more armaments. The advantage of *détente* has been that it makes the environment somewhat more predictable.

—Except that the American Congress wants to spend more money on armaments than the American president at the moment.

KISSINGER: This is a new development. Until 1974 the Congress consistently tried to give much less.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHAT, IN YOUR VIEW, *lies behind the massive Russian rearmament? President Carter said in Annapolis that the Russians are arming far beyond their natural security requirements. But who decides what their natural requirements are?*

KISSINGER: Of course, you have to ask yourself what do the Soviets consider their natural security requirements.

—They have told us many times that they have to be "as strong as the West plus China plus Iran."

KISSINGER: Well, the Soviet Union, as the inheritor of Russian history, probably has a very highly developed sense of insecurity, therefore this produces a tendency to arms. Another factor is the paradox that the Communist states have really no normal method for arriving at decisions except by the contest of bureaucratic forces, and within that contest the military establishment always has a very great voice. Therefore, inevitably, it has a claim on resources.

> ***". . .The one thing that the Communist systems do better than any other one thing is the accumulation of arms, and there is an almost inevitable tendency to do those things which a nation does well—to continue doing them."***

Thirdly, if you look at Communist industries, Communist economic development, it is generally not the most spectacular success of the Communist system. In fact, you could say that the one thing that the Communist systems do better than any other one thing is the accumulation of arms, and there is an almost inevitable tendency to do those things which a nation does well—to continue doing them.

—A most startling interpretation of Russian rearmament efforts.

KISSINGER: Anyway, I don't believe that there is a fixed plan for world domination. I don't believe, for example, that the Romans had a scheme to achieve a Roman Empire; all one's study of Roman history would tend to indicate that they fell into one situation after another. Nevertheless, in time they achieved such a predominance that they nevertheless created an empire.

—Do you see a Soviet Empire comparable to the Roman Empire?

KISSINGER: I would say that the long-term geopolitical position of the Soviet Union is not brilliant. The long-term domestic evolution of the Soviet Union is not exactly brilliant. Therefore, the temptation to substitute foreign policy successes for the domestic construction must be very great, and very soon they will have the means—and they have already growing means—to do it. Five years ago, certainly ten years ago, they could not have transported $1 billion worth of arms to Ethiopia in a very short period of time.

So, when I say they don't have a fixed plan, it doesn't mean that they will not acquire the power to take advantage of those opportunities that a revolutionary world inevitably generates.

—Some 36% of your American fellow-countrymen believe that the East is already superior to the West militarily. Can that really be so?

KISSINGER: This I don't happen to believe. I think that if you look at the potential strength of the West, that if the Soviets ever triggered us into a real mobilisation of our resources, we could still outdo them enough, and, therefore, there is a limit beyond which the Soviet Union will be very reluctant to push us even if their forces-in-being are larger than ours, unless they could knock us out completely, which I do not believe they can do.

—Do they want to?

KISSINGER: To risk everything on one throw of the dice, would, in any event, be against the Communist philosophy of having History on their side. I still believe that our potential strength and even our actual strength is not that precarious.

—The Russians think as you do. They themselves say that they are inferior to the Americans worldwide. And they say that they can only compensate for this by maintaining local superiority in Europe by means of their tank concentration which is a factor in the correlation of forces, of the so-called "balance."

KISSINGER: I think that the Soviet military build-up is reaching a point where in a measurable period of time they will be able to threaten not only Europe, but also many other regions simultaneously, and this is a matter to which we have to pay very great attention.

—Does the stationing of the new Russian SS-20 rockets make Western counter-measures necessary?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KISSINGER: Well, I have, from my first book on, and in an interview with you . . .

—That was in 1959. . .

KISSINGER: . . . maintained that the time when Europe could rely entirely on weapons and forces stationed far away was drawing to an end, and I have always believed that the regional balance in Europe requires increasingly greater emphasis.

—That would imply that the Russians must withdraw their tanks or the West must set something equivalent against them.

KISSINGER: Yes. You know there is a limit beyond which withdrawals really don't do you much good because when they go back 400 miles, they have a capacity to reinforce. I don't know what the studies show: how long it would take them to bring those tanks back. You cannot, in other words, establish the balance only by Soviet withdrawals. There has to be a build-up of Western forces to achieve the balance.

—Would the 11,000 Cruise Missiles which the Americans may perhaps construct be something with which the Russians would have to reckon?

KISSINGER: I have never believed in any one wonder-weapon. The fact is, I saved the missile when the Pentagon wanted to drop it from the budget in 1973. So, I am in favour of it, but I don't think one should say that it is only the Cruise missile that can be a counter-weight to the *SS-20*, so long as the decision is made that there will be *some* counterweight to the *SS-20*.

> ***". . .I am a great believer in first making a decision in principle: What is it that you are trying to do? Then the technical implementation of that decision is a secondary question."***

—The argument was simply: if you introduce a new weapon, we will introduce one too?

KISSINGER: Certainly. It could be a Cruise missile, it could be a ballistic missile. I am a great believer in first making a decision in principle: What is it that you are trying to do? Then the technical implementation of that decision is a secondary question. I am not at all against Cruise missiles. I think the Cruise missile is one device; other types of missiles could also be considered.

YOU ALSO MENTIONED *Soviet air-transport capacity and you said that a few years ago the Russians would not have been able to organise an aerial bridge such as that to Ethiopia now. Have they meanwhile become superior to the Americans in their capacity to transport troops and equipment over long distances in a short time?*

KISSINGER: First of all, in most areas in question their distances are much shorter than ours. So I would think probably our airlift capacity is still superior if you simply count the number of airplanes and their capacity. But if you relate them to the distances in areas that are likely to be in dispute, they have made very great progress in approaching our capability.

—The Russians repeat that they are in every way inferior to the USA in amphibious warfare. And actually there has beeen no proof to the contrary.

KISSINGER: Well, how do you propose to prove it? You would have to lose a war. . . .

—Nevertheless the argument goes on. But what do you think is behind the gigantic Soviet naval rearmament? Is it a Tirpitz-like illusion, a sort of need to catch up, or do the Russians think that they require this shining weapon for their role in world politics?

KISSINGER: Of all Soviet armament efforts, the one that worries me relatively least is their naval build-up, especially their surface navy. It is very difficult for a country that has no sea tradition to establish a pre-eminent naval position.

—The bear is still the bear?

KISSINGER: I mean, after all, Germany, which had a long and outstanding military tradition, never really used its surface fleet with strategic effectiveness.

—Germany was confined within a sea triangle and the Russians are based in the Murmansk fjord.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KISSINGER: I was just going to say this. You must consider that a large percentage of the Soviet Navy is in Murmansk; the northern fleet is in one port. I am not saying it is insignificant, but I would have thought that in naval warfare we have geopolitical advantages that I would count decidedly on our side.

—But the task which the Russians have set themselves, to maintain a presence in all the oceans of the world, may induce them to meddle in matters which otherwise they would have left alone.

KISSINGER: Well, it gives them a capacity to project power into areas where they could not have done it previously. I think it gives them a capacity for intervention, a capacity for harassment that they would not otherwise have had—quite apart from their submarine fleet which I rate much higher than their surface fleet.

—But a surface fleet presence is visible and committed. The Russians can hardly say that they could not intervene in this place or that. Because it was too far away.

KISSINGER: They can do that better, though, with airplanes than with ships. After all, one should never give the Soviets excessive credit. It is, after all, not impossible that when the Soviets establish their military budget they divide it up among their services the way this has been known to happen in other States—on the basis of the bureaucratic weight of the various contestants—and that they may be building things for which there is no overwhelming geopolitical need. Why should they be immune from these bureaucratic complexes?

IT IS CONCEIVABLE *that in regard to Russian armament the West has false information or is working on wrong estimates, that we may be inclined to overestimate Russian armaments as, for instance, the German Luftwaffe was overestimated before the outbreak of World War II. At that time the British thought that Hitler had 10,000 aircraft whereas in reality he had only 2,500.*

KISSINGER: Yes, although they didn't achieve quite so little. Seriously, it is quite possible that the efficiency of the Soviet military forces is not as high as you would deduce from simply counting their numbers. It is also true that certainly in airplanes (and probably in many other weapons) the West is probably technologically superior. And this helps to establish a certain amount of balance.

There must be some reason why the Soviet Union at no time since the end of the War has ever run the risk of a direct confrontation with the United States, once they understood that certain actions would indeed produce it. They have usually acted only in areas where there was some doubt about whether it would lead to a confrontation.

Having said all of this, I believe nevertheless that the growth of Soviet military strength in the last ten years, if you project it over another ten years, would create military realities that must have political consequences. The West must, therefore, absolutely strengthen its military capacity.

> ***"It is always a mistake to speak of any one card you have as if it were the trump.***
>
> ***The hardest thing to understand about foreign policy is that it has to be extended over time, and that there are no decisive individual moves. . . ."***

—The argument is often heard here in Washington that one must show more toughness to the Russians. The argument runs something like this. The Russians' trump card is military power; the West's trump cards are industry and technological progress. If the Russians do not show themselves more forthcoming in the military field (in Africa, for instance) the West must play its economic trump cards.

KISSINGER: It is always a mistake to speak of any one card you have as if it were the trump.

The hardest thing to understand about foreign policy is that it has to be extended over time and that there are no decisive individual moves. Within this context, however, I have always believed that there has to be some relationship between the economic assistance that is being given to the Soviet Union directly or indirectly, and its political conduct, especially its foreign-policy conduct. Whether that in itself is decisive or not cannot be determined in the abstract, or theoretically. But there is something wrong if the West finances the military expansion of the Soviet Union.

—Does that apply also to the 13.8 million tons of grain which Moscow had to buy in the USA last year and got at preferential prices? The US farmers, after all, have a lobby.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KISSINGER: I have always been in favour . . .

— . . . though without much success . . .

KISSINGER: . . . of relating the agricultural sales to foreign policy conduct.

DURING YOUR VISIT *to Hamburg in May you said that it was important, when talking to Brezhnev* to Fraktur zu reden [*to talk black and white*]. *What should one understand by that? how can it be done?*

KISSINGER: I wouldn't express it in those terms. I don't even know how you would translate "*Fraktur*" into English.

—"To talk plain English" perhaps?

KISSINGER: I think it is very important not to have ambiguities. These inevitably produce temptations to probe. Since Soviet policies usually are made with some care and always made with complicated bureaucratic compromises, I think it is extremely important to be very clear-cut with the Soviets. We always attempted to do this. I don't say this has to be done publicly, but I think it is important.

—You have spent days and days in very private sessions with Brezhnev and Gromyko. Could you talk toughly, candidly, and frankly? and did they accept that?

KISSINGER: You are trying to get pre-publication scoops.

—Why not a bit of advance publicity for your book of memoirs?

KISSINGER: No, I have always found that you could talk frankly with the Soviet leaders.

—Not in the usual stereotyped phrases?

KISSINGER: No, I have always thought that to talk directly and frankly is the best method of dealing with the Soviets.

—You once described Russian foreign policy as "basically unimaginative." The strength of Soviet foreign policy lies in their colossal pertinacity, the capacity to play this pertinacity card against our impatience. If, in negotiation, we have not made some new proposal inside three months, then we ourselves become uneasy—and the Russians exploit this. If, however, the Russians are employing, exploiting, or using the Cubans as we think they are at the moment, they are perhaps not quite so unimaginative.

KISSINGER: I have to say that the use of Cubans is something that I would not have predicted. On the other hand—I repeat—it cannot be beyond the wit of man to defeat the Cubans; and it could have worked in Angola.

—It is said that only tact stopped you publicly describing the Soviet leadership as poor, even though the remark is ascribed to you that: "The problem with the Soviet Union is that it is ruled by such mediocre people."

KISSSINGER: Well, there are many things attributed to me. I say that about my associates too. It is a symptom of my megalomania.

—But you have certainly lamented about the Soviet "gerontocracy", about the problem of Russia being ruled by such old men.

KISSSINGER: No, I didn't complain about it.

—But you have referred to the fact.

KISSINGER: It is a fact.

—What difficulties for the West may arise therefrom? or, perhaps, what advantages?

KISSINGER: I think that older men are usually less risk-taking than younger men, although you can't generalise this. One of the problems is that, statistically, it is probable that a large number of the present Politburo will leave within a relatively short time-span—whenever that happens to be. But since they are all of roughly the same age, there will come a period, at some point which I don't want to predict. . .

— . . . the sight presented by Brezhnev's appearance in Bonn. . .

KISSINGER: . . . at which several of the top leaders will be changing within a relatively short time-span, and this will certainly present the West with new problems.

MANY PEOPLE *in the West have become used to differentiating between doves and hawks in Moscow as if they were established parties. The conclusion is then drawn that we must do everything to reinforce the role of the doves and prevent the hawks gaining the upper hand. Do you regard this approach as correct?*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KISSINGER: No. First of all, I don't think we know who the doves are and who are the hawks. I think if you look at the history of relations with the Soviet Union, it is usually the current Soviet leader who is considered a dove, and it is always the last Soviet leader who is considered a hawk. For example, when Stalin was alive, he was generally considered a dove in Western commentaries.

—And so he was in foreign policy.

KISSINGER: And so was Khrushchev.

—Until the Cuba crisis.

KISSINGER: All that I am saying is that undoubtedly there are differences of opinion in the Soviet leadership. Undoubtedly ambitious men will use arguments that relate to policies that do not succeed to advance themselves, just as they do in other countries. I think we know much too little about the "doves" and the "hawks" to know which faction it is.

—We still do not know today with any certainty which of the "doves" or which of the "hawks" were behind the move into Prague.

KISSINGER: Precisely. And I don't know which argument would appeal most to the doves. Usually the argument is that you strengthen the doves by making concessions. You can also say that you strengthen the doves by demonstrating that it is much too risky to pursue a certain course—because it could be that that is the best argument that the doves have available.

—Hawks and doves—that only means something to you in relation to your own domestic policy?

KISSINGER: I am not in favour of toughness for toughness' sake, or of using the Soviet leaders to demonstrate to a domestic audience what abusive language one can use or what victories one can score in a debate. But I am also opposed to pretending that the Soviets are simply misunderstood commercial travellers from the Midwest.

—Like Vice-President Nixon in his "kitchen debate"?

KISSINGER: That was in Moscow. I believe one should be firm in substance but polite in form.

—You once said that Brezhnev and "the war generation of Soviet leaders" had no conception how strong the Soviet Union was militarily. Did you mean that future . . .

KISSINGER: You seem to me to quote a lot from my private conversations.

—Not at all. You said that in public.

KISSINGER: Really?

—Otherwise we would not quote you. What did you mean—that the younger generation, when it came to power, would have a greater sense of responsibility, or, perhaps, that it would be more presumptuous?

KISSINGER: First of all, I don't want to confirm that particular quote. But what is certainly true is that the generation of Brezhnev, having gone through the purges, through the Second World War, and through a whole series of crises since then, is likely to be more cautious and more aware of the dangers of international complications than might be the case with a younger generation which is more technocratic, has less experience, and is possibly more familiar with the new technology.

THE CHINESE are always saying that war with the Soviet Union is unavoidable. Is it propaganda, or must one have serious apprehensions that such a thing might happen?

KISSINGER: I think when you are dealing with a country of so much military power, of course there is always the danger that it will be tempted to use it. I think, however, we have the capability to make that prospect always look unattractive; and therefore it is entirely up to us whether there will be a war or not. If we become too weak, then there could be a war. But I do not believe a war is inevitable, and I do not believe that the Soviets are determined to start a war regardless of the opposition they will face.

—At the moment it seems that demonstrative display of the Chinese card is making the Soviet leaders very uneasy, and one wonders whether it is wise to put one's emphasis on China in this way (as Zbigniew Brzezinski in particular is said to have done).

KISSINGER: You know, I have very high regard for the Chinese leaders. The Chinese have been an independent country for 3,000 years. They are not going to be anybody's card. They conduct their own foreign policy according to their own interests, and we have to conduct our foreign policy according to our own interest. When those two coincide, we should cooperate. When the two do not coincide, we should pursue our own policy.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> *"When you do something unusual it would be better to do it first and to see what the results would be before you announce it. . . . There are some things that I think have to be done secretly."*

I do not think we can specifically "play the Chinese card" to suit our purposes. What we can do is to cooperate, work on parallel objectives—e.g. we both have an interest in preventing the world balance of power from being overthrown. That, I think, is a common objective. This is not "playing the Chinese card."

—Nevertheless, at the moment, the Chinese miss no opportunity of annoying the Russians, for instance by flirting with the West German Bundeswehr, *making anti-Soviet speeches in Africa, or trying to buy Western arms. The nervousness of the Russians is noticeable to us, and a danger factor could develop here.*

KISSINGER: The Chinese have the problem of not having built up their military strength for such a long time that they now have to make perhaps more rapid decisions than they would if there had been time for a more evolutionary development. But I don't think it is in our interest or the Chinese to provoke the Russians just to prove that we can annoy them.

—Should the West sell arms to the Chinese?

KISSINGER: I think that it is in our interest that it is not easy to overrun China.

—When you were first in Peking you spoke about "this country so mysterious to us." Was China at that time more mysterious to you than Russia, and is it still more mysterious than Russia today, or do you now know about the same amount about both countries?

KISSINGER: The first time I went to China, I did not know a great deal about it. And since it was a secret trip, I could not prepare myself very systematically.

—Was this secretiveness really necessary, this strange detour to China via Pakistan?

KISSINGER: You have to remember what the problem was. We had had no direct contact with the Chinese; we didn't know exactly what we would meet there. The reaction in the world and within our country would have been unbelievable if we had announced this was going to happen. They would have given us a list of things we had to achieve before we ever got there, and when we didn't even yet know whom we were going to talk to! We would have been negotiating with ourselves before ever meeting the Chinese. And when you do something so unusual it would be better to do it first and to see what the results would be before you announce it. If we had announced it, we would have had to testify before 500 Congressional committees explaining what we were going to do, give reassurances, submit briefs. There are some things that I think have to be done secretly.

—In Moscow you negotiated for three days without your Ambassador even knowing that you were there. Have you never been particularly frightened if things went wrong of making yourself ridiculous as a sort of unmasked Haroun al-Rashid?

KISSINGER: No, that was one of the risks we took.

—In the meantime . . .

KISSINGER: In the meantime I have learned a great deal about China. I repeat, I have always respected the intelligence and subtlety of the Chinese leaders, but I know I would not consider myself an expert on Chinese culture. I suppose I know a little more about Soviet, about Russian history; still I think I understand both of them about equally well as far as the impact on American foreign policy is concerned.

DURING YOUR PERIOD OF OFFICE *one of the greatest sources of danger to world peace was the Middle East. It seems that, as time went on, you gained increasing respect for Sadat and did not think Begin's policy very profitable at the time. Is that right?*

KISSINGER: Well, I would put it slightly differently. First, I think Sadat is a great man, I consider one of the few active spiritual and ethical qualities that I have seen is his trip to Jerusalem. You can give it a thousand pragmatic interpretations, but for somebody who has seen Arabs and Israelis deal with each other, this could not be done by just anybody, no matter how much they may have thought it might be a great stroke of genius.

On the other hand, Israel is in a different position. It is, after all, a population of only 3 million with a very precarious existence. It doesn't know, from its point of view, whether Sadat, even if he is really sincere, how long he

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will stay in office. So it is harder for Israeli leaders to make the *grand geste* than it is for a great Arab leader. It is not easy for any of these leaders.

I regret that for a variety of reasons these negotiations have got on to a legalistic level. I don't think that is the most fruitful way of proceeding.

—The greatest danger spot in the more immediate future is thought, at least within NATO, *to be Yugoslavia. After Tito's death there could easily be a make-or-break test in this multi-national state, during which pro-Soviet forces might call in the Red Army to help. Do you share this anxiety?*

KISSINGER: Well, I don't want to raise any questions about Marshal Tito. According to actuarial tables his life expectancy is certainly more limited than it was at the time of his rupture with Stalin. I think that will not be excessively insulting to him if I say that.

But at that point, whether Yugoslavia will have domestic upheavals or tensions that would tempt outside intervention, I don't think even the leaders of Yugoslavia can tell today—because if they could, they would deal with them. It is generally thought that this could become a problem.

PEOPLE TALK OF *the "self-Finlandisation" of Europe and in particular of West Germany. Brzezinski used the word to a German visitor whom we both know. Is this an anxiety you share, or is it over-dramatised?*

KISSINGER: Yes, I had that concern, especially in relationship to Euro-Communism. I would not apply it to countries like the German Federal Republic, or France, or Britain. I think in countries where the Euro-Communists are gaining significant influence, it could become true.

—Does the USA, and do you, sanction a "special relationship" between the German Federal Republic and the Soviet Union's hegemony because, more than all your other allies, Bonn must be interested in good relations with Moscow—if only, though not solely, because of Berlin?

KISSINGER: As a theoretical question it is almost unanswerable because the Federal Republic is now strong enough and stable enough to conduct its own foreign policy, whether we approve of it or not. I would think West Germany has always had the dilemma that it has had a national concern which was not shared with equal intensity by all the countries with which it is allied. That is inevitable.

—In the early days of Brandt's "Ostpolitik", why were you so sceptical, so obviously troubled by mixed feelings?

KISSINGER: Because it is, of course, understandable that the Federal Republic will pursue certain national objectives, but there is also the historic danger that a Germany conducting a totally separate or "special" policy in the centre of the Continent could so disquiet everybody as to bring on all the dangers that it is seeking to avoid. Now, I think that has always been inherent in any German policy, whether it is the "Hallstein Doctrine", which ran the risk of confrontations, or the "Ostpolitik", which ran the risk of excessive negotations. It is true that I had some doubts about the trends; and it is also true (and I think that Brandt and Bahr will agree with this), that once we had agreed on what they would attempt, I gave them a great deal of support.

YOU HAVE FREQUENTLY SAID *that in everything you did you were guided by a sense of history. History is certainly no cook-book from which one can cull recipes, but history does sharpen the perception of the structural problems of a situation. If you now look back at the years when you were active in foreign politics and as Secretary of State, what lessons would you wish to draw from them, if they can be put concisely?*

KISSINGER: This I really am in the process of thinking through, and I don't want to do that in a few paragraphs. It is an important question and it is not that I have already thought it through and am trying to save it. I am really in the process of thinking about it all.

—One of your admirers once said that you had written about Bismarck with such "passion and brio" as to give the impression that, had you and Bismarck met, there would have been a sort of spiritual affinity. And you yourself once said that the statesmanlike figure you admired most was not Metternich but Bismarck. Can Bismarck's policy still be taken as a model today?

KISSINGER: Popular journalism tends to describe models as if one wanted to imitate somebody on the basis of some personal admiration. This is not the case. The problem for statesmen is that the only lessons from which they can learn are those of historical experience—and then one has to be careful not to assume that they are identical.

I studied Bismarck and developed great

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

admiration for him, even though I have to say that he is partly responsible for some of Germany's modern tragedies. I think he is the first modern statesman in this sense: that he attempted to conduct foreign policy on the basis of an assessment of the balance of forces, unrestrained by the clichés of a previous period.

> ***". . .The criticism one could make of Bismarck is that his system was so complex it required a genius in every generation, and that is asking too much."***

What is more important is that he understood that power can be used only as an instrument of policy if you are prepared to be moderate in the political consequences you draw from it—and if you respect the right to existence of other states with whom, over an historic period, you have to coexist.

Now this had led him into a policy that was a virtuoso performance and of extraordinary complexity; and his successors simply did not have his genius to conduct such a complex policy. In simplifying it they were left only with the calculus of pure military power, without understanding the political (and other) aspects; and in this sense I think he was responsible for some of the later tragedies.

But I think in the conduct of foreign policy—in the understanding of the necessity for options—he performed masterfully.

—Yes, but even he eventually went so far with his system of "reinsurance" that he was no longer in control of it. That is only human, over so long a time.

KISSINGER: I would have to say that anyone who can maintain a system for 30 years is successful. His greatest weakness was the weakness of all great men; that he did not bring along his successor.

—Yes, he had only Count Herbert Bismarck—at least he reared one.

KISSINGER: Ideally if he could have passed it on to somebody who understood what he was trying to do, and if he had had an Emperor who was as willing to let his successor operate as his Emperor was, it might have gone on for a considerably longer time.

I think it is probably true that the biggest criticism one could make of Bismarck is that his system was so complex it required a genius in every generation, and that is asking too much.

—Does that also apply to American foreign policy over the last eight-to-ten years?

KISSINGER: I think the biggest problem anybody has is to achieve continuity. No matter how spectacular one's successes are, if they cannot be carried on, then one has to ask oneself: Is it inherent in the nature of the policy, or inherent in the successors, or a combination of both? In any case, it is a problem.

—Bismarck, after all, spent months on his estate which you were unable to do when you were in charge of foreign policy.

KISSINGER: Partly, because I didn't have one.

IF YOU THINK BACK *over the important decisions you took during your eight years in government, which decision—looked at today—do you think was wrong?*

KISSINGER: Well, I think it is premature to admit that.

—What, then, was the highlight in your political career?

> ***"What I tried to do was to attempt to base American foreign policy on some fundamental principles of national interest, and to avoid those oscillations between euphoria and panic which have been so characteristic."***

KISSINGER: I avoid answering both of those questions because certainly mistakes were made and certainly high points were achieved. But I really would like them to be seen in more historical terms and more as a process; and for that an interview is not really the best forum.

—Have you still got enough left over for your book?

KISSINGER: I think the most important thing I tried to do was—with what success, even I really don't know—to attempt to base American foreign policy on some fundamental principles of national interest and to avoid those oscillations between euphoria and panic which have been so

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

characteristic. We will have to see whether that succeeded, and if it didn't succeed, somebody else will have to do it.

—What was the high spot . . . The ending of the Viet Nam war, manoeuvring the Middle East war in 1973 and the armistice mediation, or perhaps the meeting with the Chinese leaders in Peking?

KISSINGER: Well, each of these had tremendous qualities for me personally. Probably, what I wanted most to achieve was to end the Viet Nam War under decent conditions.

—Must it not have been a great shock to you and something like a great moral defeat when you saw on television your Ambassador in Saigon running up to a helicopter on the roof of his Embassy with the Stars-and-Stripes under his arm?

KISSINGER: It was a very painful occasion. And we did it to ourselves by reducing aid to Viet Nam in each peacetime year by 25%. But it was still better that we had to evacuate with 1,200 men: imagine the scene if we had had to do it with 500,000 men.

—You once prophesied that the whole of Europe would possibly be Marxist in ten years' time. Was that merely a melancholy mood, or is that your conviction?

KISSINGER: No, there is some folklore that will never subside, and I did not say that all of Western Europe would be Marxist in ten years.

—We do not know of any Marxist country. Do you know of one?

KISSINGER: Certainly not East of the Iron Curtain.

DR KISSINGER, *you are now 55 years old and if one thinks of your career, you have had one of the most interesting assignments a man can have in world politics. Talleyrand was Foreign Minister of France four times (the last time at the age of 61). Should—or must—the world reckon with Henry Kissinger twice becoming US Secretary of State?*

KISSINGER: We cannot demoralise the professional Foreign Service with this prospect before them.

Method

I will write poems
like Omar Sharif in *Doctor Zhivago.*
On snowy mornings
I will leave my wife sleeping
and slip into a room
empty except for a table and chair.
Eyes growing moist, Adam's apple throbbing,
I will stare at the winter
and begin to write madly
in a neat hand, blotting nothing.
In an hour and a half I will tear from my brain
eight lyrics, two odes and the first third of an epic!
Then my wife will appear—radiant,
loving, amazed at my genius—
and we will have coffee.

If the conditions are right,
and you know what you're doing,
poetry's easy.

Geoffrey Smith

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George MacBeth

By Way of a Prologue

I

Imagine, in England,
Someone who is looking at the sun moving
Through the dilapidated remnants
Of the Eastern hemisphere. His name is Harry, but
He is not, or is not yet,
That insouciant, military progenitor
Whom all will recall
From the history of Agincourt. He is Harry Crosby.

II

Imagine, gentlemen,
That he has a pair of binoculars
Constructed of good German glass
And that he is watching that red, singular orb
With a kind of passion
Most of us give only to women. He is entirely possessed
With the magnificent, celestial
Burnish of the solar energy. He is Harry Crosby.

III

Imagine, in your mind's eye,
Two people lying dead on a bed in
A small first-floor room
In an uptown hotel in New York City. It is nineteen
Twenty nine
And the stock market is about to crash, but
That is not why the young man
With the smoking gun in his hand has fired. He is Harry Crosby.

IV

Imagine the winter sun
Glittering through the forgotten window on the still
Beautiful eyes
Of the girl he has killed by a shot in the brain
Or who has perhaps
Killed herself, we are not sure, by a shot
Pre-arranged with him, or
Not pre-arranged, and has left him alive. He is Harry Crosby.

V

Imagine that just one second
Ago the blood welled from a single wound in her head
And the girl died
In the path of the sun driving across Manhattan
Towards a new decade
And imagine that Harry Crosby who has been
In love with her, as with many others,
Has taken the last light on his shaking brow. And the play is about to begin.

VI

Imagine that somewhere in Heaven
The nationality of catastrophe has become incidental

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And that Harry Crosby
Is a myth of England. Yes, it seems different now,
I know, to be imagining
Someone so close to home on that lonely bed
In the winter light
With a head wound. With a terrible sickness of the heart.

VII

Imagine, perhaps, though,
That the sickness for which this improbable hero died
Was a little thing
No larger than the tiny crozier in a woman's forks
For which the sun stooped
Out of the black sky, and sold his name.
Imagine that Harry Crosby
Lifted his heart, and the sun took it. And he was you.

Peter Porter

The Story of Jason

As with all good stories you cannot tell
if it is an allegory. If it is,
what should we do tomorrow,
in another week with a Thursday,
to redeem our ordinariness or find
some virtue to take the place of courage?
But it is a quest with pictures
and we can set a ship like a barque
out of literature or an Adriatic liner
somewhere in the immanent foreground,
a view of the Symplegades behind;
caparisoned horses, gods and kings
and a great deal of that burning saffron
which came in with the fifteenth century—
this will suffice to identify
Jason and help him steal the fleece.

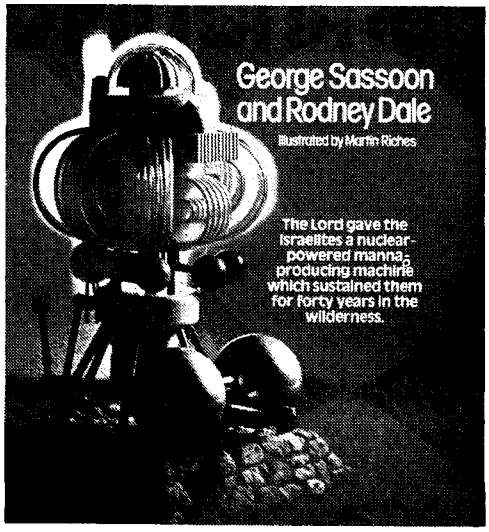
But then the sadness of pictures hits us:
we are far into the twentieth century
and must sit in innocence
admitting that hell is possible.
We see the hero setting out
from an impoverished quay, his
companions smiling conquistadores.
What we need are stories. Regard this
poem up to now as preparation.
A certain loquacity is natural,
long and high visions have prevailed.
Someone is alighting on the mole
and asking for the magic gardens.
He seeks old age and academies,
wife and amanuensis ready,
twilight round him and a bell
ringing in the Palazzo Vendramin.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hyam Maccoby

On a Manna-Machine Built for Two

Sassoon & Dale Mysticism


George Sassoon
and Rodney Dale
Illustrated by Martin Riches
The Lord gave the Israelites a nuclear-powered manna-producing machine which sustained them for forty years in the wilderness.

A STARTLING ARTICLE appeared in 1976, in the journal *New Scientist*, under the names of George Sassoon and Rodney Dale. The article described a Manna-Machine, used by the Children of Israel in their desert wanderings. The description of this machine, the authors claimed, could be found in the Jewish mystical book, the *Zohar*. The machine was of such advanced design that modern technology was not yet capable of constructing it, though its principles could be understood. The authors did not explain how such an advanced machine came so conveniently into the hands of the Israelites, but they hinted that an extra-terrestrial source was involved.

Most readers, after some preliminary shock, noted that the date of the issue of *New Scientist* in which the article appeared was April 1. Erich von Däniken, however, the well-known and best-selling proponent of theories about the visitations of extra-terrestrials, took the article seriously (not perhaps being conversant with English saturnalian customs) and quoted it in his book *Beweise* which appeared shortly afterwards.

Von Däniken, however, was in a sense right, since the article was never intended as a jape—except by the witty editor of *New Scientist*.[1] The authors believed quite seriously in their thesis, and have now followed up their article by two books. In one, *The Manna-Machine*, the theory of the machine is explained in detail, the extra-terrestrial aspects being developed to such an extent that a full-blown theory of the origins of Judaism is presented. In the other, *The Kabbalah Decoded*, a new translation of the relevant parts of the *Zohar* is offered.[2]

IT MUST BE SAID AT ONCE that the more obvious flaws of the presentation in *New Scientist* have now been eliminated. The authors have put in some very hard work to substantiate their brainwave. They have studied Aramaic (more especially George Sassoon, who is a linguist as well as an engineer), and they have made themselves familiar with the Biblical background of their texts, and, to a lesser extent, with other relevant Jewish literature. They are fully aware now, for example, that the *Zohar* was composed in the Middle Ages, *not* in remote antiquity, and that its language is a pastiche of Aramaic, containing terms and idioms taken from medieval philosophical Hebrew and even from Spanish. However, the rushed nature of the authors'

[1] See in ENCOUNTER (June 1977) "Däniken & his Flying Machines", by Helmut Gumnior, and the surprising correspondence in ENCOUNTER, August 1977, pp. 94-95.

[2] *The Manna-Machine*. By GEORGE SASSOON and RODNEY DALE. Sidgwick & Jackson, £7.95. *The Kabbalah Decoded: a new translation of the "Ancient of Days" texts of the Zohar*. By GEORGE SASSOON. Edited by RODNEY DALE. Duckworth, £12.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intrusion into angelic territory is all too evident at times. The translation contains a great many howlers. Two examples are the following:

1. (*Kabbalah Decoded*, p. 186). The phrase translated ". . . . like the house of lower mercy" should be ". . . like the womb [or vagina] of a woman." The translator confuses *rehem* (womb) with the root RHM (to have mercy), and the noun *iteta* (woman) with the adverb *letata* (below). The expression *bet rehem* (literally, "house of the womb") is a regular Talmudic expression for womb or vagina.

2. (*Kabbalah Decoded*, p. 131). Sassoon/Dale translate:

> And it counts 4 legacies of righteous men, a hundred worlds of brightnesses. . . .

This should be:

> And from it the righteous will inherit four hundred worlds of brightnesses. . . .

The translator has confused the preposition *min* with the verb *mene*, "to count", and has wrongly separated the "four" from the "hundred." Also he has turned the verb "inherit" into a noun, "legacies."

One would be inclined to show some indulgence towards such blunders, and to give credit to the authors for the degree of mastery they have attained in the Aramaic of the *Zohar*, working from scratch with the aid of a grammar and a dictionary, and without expert help. Unfortunately, however, the authors are far too complacent about their achievement. They declare that Aramaic is a "very simple" language. It was a 19th-century classical scholar who declared that he could, if he wished, "mug up science in a fortnight." Nowadays it is the scientists who have this kind of confidence in their ability to acquire knowledge of unfamiliar subjects. It is necessary to say, therefore, that, quite apart from the distortions introduced into the translation by the authors' idiosyncratic views on the nature of the material, the translation is unreliable even in relatively easy passages.

IT IS EVEN MORE UNRELIABLE when the translation calls for an awareness of literary allusions. Rodney Dale writes bravely in his Foreword to *Kabbalah Decoded*,

> The other concern . . . was our lack of specifically Jewish scholarship. Again, such training can be a double-edged sword. We may have failed to grasp some references, and we may have missed allusions which to others are obvious, but such failures may themselves have served to keep us on our path.

But the authors are unaware of the extent to which the *Zohar* is steeped in the Talmud and the Midrash (not merely in the Bible and mystical literature); and this often leads to total miscomprehension and gibberish. An example may be taken from the *Book of the Mystery* (BoM 176b, I: 21–4). The Sassoon/Dale version runs:

> Six thousand years (*or* teeth) hang from the six first (things). The seventh of them is that which is strengthened on its own, and the whole was destroyed in twelve hours; it was "formless etc." The thirteen, they will rise up in mercies and they are renewed as before. And all those six stand. For it is written: "He created" (BRA, Gen 1: 1) before it is written "it was" (Gen 1: 2), and that is exactly so. And after, "formless and void and darkness"; and the Lord alone is raised up in that day.

The authors proceed to explain this passage in terms of the stripping-down of the Manna-Machine and its reassembly.

But the first thing to understand about this passage is that it is based on a Talmudic saying (*Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin* 97a):

> Rav Kattina said: Six thousand years shall the world exist, and one thousand (the seventh) it shall be desolate; as it is written, "And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isaiah 2: 11).

With the aid of this saying it is possible to make sense of the Zoharic passage mauled by Sassoon/Dale as follows:

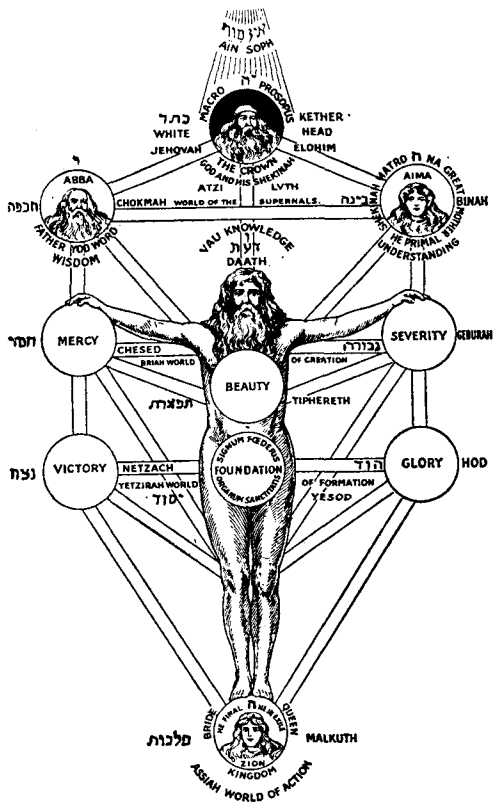
> Six thousand years (of the earth's existence) are represented by the first six words (of Gen 1: 2, excluding the first word for reasons given). The seventh word represents the time when He shall reign alone, and all will be destroyed in twelve hours, as it is said, "There was void and waste." The thirteenth word signifies that God in his mercy will raise and renew all six (days of Creation) as before. (The proof that there will be a Destruction) is that it is said, "He created", and afterwards it is said, "The earth became void and waste and darkness", and the word "became" should be taken literally (not as simply "was"). (The

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proof that God will reign alone is the verse) "And the Lord alone will be exalted in that day" (Isaiah 2: 11).

Thus, all the elements of this Zoharic passage (except the juggling with the numbers of words in a verse) can be shown to be derived from the Talmud, and to be concerned with Talmudic eschatology. Even the use of *Isaiah* 2: 11 to show that God will reign alone before renewing creation is derived from the Talmud (see also Sanhedrin 92b). Sassoon/Dale just have no idea what the passage is about; and there is no plausibility in supposing that the passage refers to the dismantling and reassembly of a Machine, or in the suggested translation "teeth" instead of "years", or in the notion that "six stand" (a wrong translation) refers to the six feet of a Machine.

ON THE OTHER HAND, not all the authors' re-interpretations are as implausible as this. Certain parts of the *Zohar*, in which the nature and constitution of God are being described, *do* sound like descriptions of a complicated machine.



The Sacred Tree of the Sephiroth. From CONCISE DICTIONARY OF JUDAISM *(ed. Runes, London, 1959).*

These passages are quite unlike anything in the Talmud, which does not indulge in detailed theosophical speculations about the nature of God. It was perhaps inevitable that one day the *Zohar* would undergo an explanation in terms of engineering. The day has been delayed thus far only because engineers do not usually read mystical literature.

Jewish mystical literature does tend to talk in terms of "flows" and compartments, of balances and paths, of "left side" and "right side," and it is not difficult to think of its theosophy as a kind of hydraulic system. And when two such hard-headed characters as Messrs Sassoon and Dale come along, it is not surprising that they even interpret the celebrated *hieros gamos*, or Divine Marriage, of the mystics as a locking-together of male and female parts in the engineering sense. Thus Sassoon & Dale have come to the conclusion that the elaborate description of the mysteries of God found in the *Zohar* is nothing more or less than the description of a machine; and casting about for a purpose for this machine, they found it in a stray remark about manna, and concluded that the machine was for the production of manna in the wilderness. Given this original insight (which seems to have come with the force of a revelation on reading Mathers' translation *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, and noting its strong resemblance in style to engineering manuals with which both authors are professionally concerned), the main features of the machine came into focus: the blinding bright light (for the photo-synthesis of algae); the division into compartments (for the culture and processing of the algae); the smoking exhaust pipe and the delivery pipes and tap, and the network of cooling pipes and electric cables (called in the sources the "hair" and "beard" of God).

WHAT ALL THIS hardly takes into account is the actualising tendency of the mystical literature, and particularly the *Zohar*, in its meditation on the metaphors of the Bible, the Talmud and the Midrash. Something similar can be seen in the English metaphysical poets: a metaphor (adopted originally because of *one* point of resemblance) is turned round and round until manifold points of resemblance are found, almost as if the metaphor is regarded as a key to deep mysteries of structure. A very simple example from the *Zohar* is its amplification of the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Talmudic term "the wings of the *Shekhinah* (Divine presence)." The Talmud says that proselytes are "taken under the wings of the *Shekhinah*", a natural metaphor comparing God's love to that of a bird for its young. (In the New Testament the same metaphor is ascribed to Jesus: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!") In the *Zohar*, however, we find the following: (I: 13a):

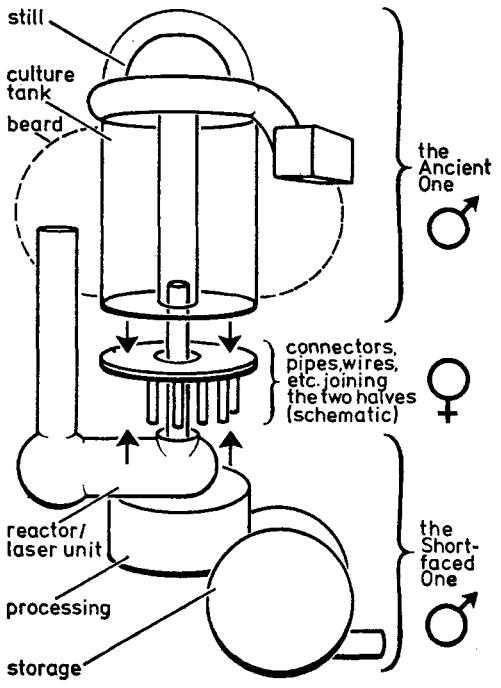
> The right wing has two compartments, which branch out from it for two other nations who are most closely related to Israel [prob. Christendom and Islam], and therefore have entrance to these compartments. Underneath the left wing there are two other compartments which are divided between two other nations, namely Ammon and Moab. . . . There are besides under each wing other concealed enclosures and divisions from whence there emanate souls which are assigned to all the proselytes . . . they all enter under the wings of the Shekhinah, but no further . . . the children of Israel are called "those who are born from the womb", and not merely from the outer wings.

Here the "wings of the *Shekhinah*", instead of being a metaphor, become an actualised region, with compartments of both a right wing and a left wing (even more, a most unTalmudic reserve towards proselytes is shown, confining them to the "wings", as if the original phrase was intended to *limit* God's love for proselytes). All that is needed now is for some literal-minded aeronautical engineer to come forward with the assertion that we have here a description of a Jumbo 747 Jet.

DOES THIS MEAN that the *Zohar* thinks that God is a huge bird with intricately-structured wings? Not at all, for on the next page we find an equally elaborate conceit in which God has become a tree. The real point is that the *Zohar* cannot believe that such images are without multiple structural significance. And this conviction arises from the underlying certainty that all material things are figurings of the Divine.

THE CENTRAL METAPHOR of the Divine, for the *Zohar*, is Man. The Bible (*Genesis* 1: 27) says that man was made in the image of God, and the *Zohar* can be regarded as a prolonged meditation on this statement. The anthropomorphism of the *Zohar*, sometimes found crude, shocking and materialistic by its critics, arises from a disbelief in the independent existence of matter, the manifestations of which it regards as a code-system for the Divine. Since the chief symbol in this message is man himself, it is through the contemplation of man in all his aspects, including or especially the sexual, that God can be understood. God Himself is called "Adam Kadmon," or the First Adam, though the relationship of this figure to the *Ein Sof*, or infinite, unknowable God, whether an aspect, an emanation or an hypostatisation, was a matter of disagreement among Kabbalists. The similarity here to the preoccupations of Christian theology is obvious, and it accounts for the keen interest of Christians in the *Zohar* and the development of a Christian Kabbalism.

The books of the *Zohar* in which the most detailed description of "Adam Kadmon" is given are *The Greater Holy Assembly*, *The Lesser Holy Assembly*, and the *Book of the Mystery*, the



"*The plugging together of the two major components.*" *Diagram from* THE MANNA-MACHINE.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

very books with which Sassoon & Dale are chiefly concerned.[3] These books are actually omitted by the Jewish translators of the *Zohar* into English (Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon) either as too difficult, or more probably as inauthentic. In contrast, the Christian translator of the *Zohar* into Latin (Knorr von Rosenroth) concentrated mainly on these books because of their supposed relevance to the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. It was from the Latin that S. L. M. Mathers, the occultist and magical antagonist of Aleister Crowley, produced his *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, a book which has enjoyed a steady sale among devotees of the Occult. Madame Blavatsky, as Sassoon & Dale point out, cribbed part of her *The Secret Doctrine* from Mathers' work. Mathers' book is thus the only translation of these books of the *Zohar* into English before Sassoon & Dale (though imperfect or incomplete translations exist in French, German and Hebrew, as well as von Rosenroth's translation into Latin). If nothing else, Sassoon & Dale's work has drawn attention to the need for a good translation of the complete *Zohar* into English, especially as the brilliant researches of Dr Gershom Scholem have made clear that the assumptions of Sperling and Simon were wrong.[4]

THE ZOHARIC BOOKS which Sassoon & Dale interpret as describing "the Manna-Machine," are perfectly genuine, in the sense that they belong to the *Zohar* and are not later additions. The author of the *Zohar*, Moses de Leon, created not just a book but a whole pseudo-epigraphic literature, the calculated heterogeneity of which cannot disguise the underlying unity of style and vocabulary. These most esoteric books of the *Zohar* describe the Heavenly Man, or God as figured in the human body. The body described, however, is very strange. For example, it has two heads, enclosed in a third. The reason for this becomes clearer when one reflects on the fact that the Body also has both male and female genitals. What is being described here is not a man in the sense of a male, but the whole human reality of male and female, together with their drive to unity with each other. The basic mystery of the *Zohar* is the sexual union of the male aspect of God with the female aspect, or *Shekhinah*. In the present imperfect state of the universe this union is not fully achieved, and the object of religion is regarded as being to promote this union and so bring about the Messianic age, the prototype of which is the Sabbath, when the saint is united with his wife in sexual intercourse.

THIS IDEA IS, AS USUAL, based on passages of the Bible, the Talmud and the Midrash, whose simple, unsystematised and poetic sayings are elaborated by the *Zohar* in theosophic fashion. The Bible says that man was created in the image of God, and also, in the same verse, "male and female created He them", which implies that God too is both male and female. The Midrash says that Adam was at first created in hermaphrodite form, and was then separated into male and female.[5] The picture of the Heavenly Man received detail from certain Biblical passages which were particularly used as a focus of mystical meditation: the description of God on his Chariot in the first chapter of *Ezekiel*; the description of the Beloved in the *Song of Songs*, especially chapter 5: 11–15; and the vision in chapter 7 of *Daniel*. It is from these passages that the *Zohar* derives its theosophical terms: the name "Ancient of Days", the concept of God's beard (black in the *Song of Songs* and white in *Daniel*), the preoccupation with God's "head." Sassoon & Dale, however, say that these literary sources of the *Zohar* do not preclude the possibility that it is really concerned with describing a machine, and not God. For, in their view, the Biblical passages too are concerned with the Manna-Machine or with other machines from Outer Space (they quote ap-

[3] The Aramaic names for these are *Idra Rabba Kadisha*, *Idra Zutta Kadisha*, and *Sifra de-tzeniyuta*. In references, I use Sassoon & Dale's abbreviations GHA, LHA and BoM. I also follow their useful division of the books (following Mathers) into numbered verses, as well as giving the usual reference to page-numbers of the original texts.

[4] H. Sperling and M. Simon, *The Zohar* (5 vols, London, 1931–4). Knorr von Rosenroth, *Kabbala Denudata* (Sulzbach, 1677 and Frankfurt, 1684). S. L. M. Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (1887). Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1946); *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* (1969).

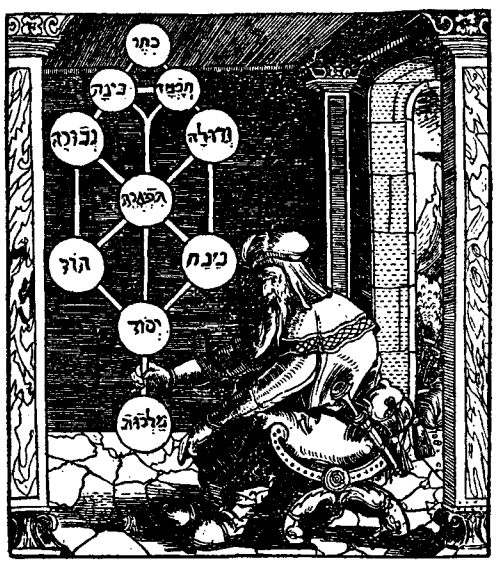
[5] *Bereshith Rabbah*, 8: 1. The same idea is found in Plato, *Symposium*, 189d, and has been traced to Babylonian literature.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provingly the theory of Josef Blumrich that *Ezekiel* 1 is about a space-ship).[6] This can hardly apply, however, to the passages from the *Song of Songs*, which were originally about a pair of human lovers, and were applied to God only later by way of allegory. Here Sassoon & Dale might say that the citation of these passages was an allegorising afterthought, part of the medieval elaboration of the ancient coded traditions about the Machine, by now only half-understood. Yet, if so, many of the mechanical details (particularly the "curly locks" which they interpret as tangles of electric cables) would be missing, for they occur only in the *Song of Songs*.

PERHAPS THE MOST DAMAGING CRITICISM of the mechanical thesis can be made on the sexual side. It is here that the engineering interpretation, carried through on the whole with great ingenuity, falters and is patently false to the data of the texts. For it is clear that the Divine sexual act takes place within the Divine Being itself, by union between the male and female aspects. But in the Sassoon & Dale exegesis, the Divine penis (*Yesod*) becomes the pipe or tap through which the finished product, the Manna, is finally delivered. It does not unite with the female part of the apparatus, which it ought to do if the engineering interpretation is to correspond point-for-point with the mystical sexual one. The best that Sassoon & Dale can do is to suggest that the Holy of Holies (where they say the Machine was situated and where the Manna was collected—in flagrant opposition to the Biblical texts which say that the manna was collected in the open air) is regarded as a female receptacle for the manna, regarded as semen.

It is true that the Divine Vagina is called in the *Zohar* "The Holy of Holies", and the earthly Holy of Holies (the innermost part of the Temple) is regarded as symbolising the Divine Vagina, especially on the Day of Atonement, the one day of the year when the High Priest (symbolising the Divine Penis) enters the Holy of Holies.[7] But it is a confusion of thought to make the Divine Penis discharge into the *earthly* Holy of Holies. But Sassoon & Dale were unable to think of a machine whose product is discharged *into itself*. They thus have to falsify both the Bible (by making the manna-collection take place in the Holy of Holies) and the *Zohar* (by making the discharge of the Divine Penis take place outside the male/female Body of God). Though they do arrange that certain "male" parts of their machine



Frontispiece from Gerhard Scholem, QABBALA: DAS BUCH BAHIR (*Leipzig*, 1923).

---

[6] Josef F. Blumrich, *The Spaceships of Ezekiel*, (1974).

[7] LHA 296b, v. 753–4. This important passage is hopelessly mistranslated by Sassoon & Dale. Their version is:

> 753. And therefore permission is not given to enter there (the Holy of Holies) to anyone except the High Priest, who comes from the side of mercy; because he does not go into that upper place, but into that which is called mercy.
>
> 754. And he enters into the Holy of Holies, and the female is sweetened and blessed. This internal Holy of Holies is inside the place that is called Zion.

The correct translation is:

> 753. Therefore only the High Priest is allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, because he belongs to the side of loving-kindness [*hesed*], just as only that which has the name *Hesed* [i.e. the Divine Penis] may enter that place above,
>
> 754. and enter the (Heavenly) Holy of Holies where the Female is sweetened, and that Holy of Holies is blessed to its innermost depth; the place that has the name "Zion."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interlock with other "female" parts, the one part which is supremely male does not interlock with anything.[8]

APART FROM THE DUALISM of male and female in the Divine, there is another important dualism or opposition (leading to unification) much stressed in the *Zohar*, that of the Divine attributes of justice and mercy. This is again a theosophic working-up of a characteristic Talmudic and Midrashic theme. The Midrash says[9] that God, before he created the present universe, created and destroyed many other universes, and it was only when he learnt to season justice with mercy that he was able to create a universe that could remain in existence. This saying lies behind some of the *Zohar*'s most cryptic passages—when it refers to the "kings of Edom", for example, it is referring to the universes that did not survive, since the Biblical list of the kings of Edom (*Genesis,* 36) was interpreted esoterically in this way.) The relation of the dichotomy of justice and mercy to that of male and female is a complex one, as is the relation of both dichotomies to the Left side and Right side and to the problem of evil. In these subtle interconnections the *Zohar* shows a psychological delicacy and insight which has been explored by the gifted Jiri Langer in his Freud-orientated *Die Erotik der Kabbala.*[10] All this aspect is lost on Sassoon & Dale, who interpret "mercy" as a technical name for manna; are not aware of the Talmudic background of the "kings", and interpret the "Long Face" and the "Short Face" as two components of the Manna-making apparatus, oblivious of the fact that "long-faced" and "short-faced" in Hebrew are idioms (translated literally into Aramaic by the *Zohar*) meaning respectively "merciful" (or "long-suffering") and "severe" (or "short-tempered").

THE WHOLE SASSOON & DALE THEORY is, thus, a brutal exercise in reductionism in which theosophic and psychological patterns and polarities are treated as the working parts of a machine. The basic physical metaphor of the *Zohar* (and of all mystical literature) is that of "flow"; from which our intrepid engineers conclude that the *Zohar* is merely a disguised manual of plumbing. I wonder what some future Sassoon & Dale will make of Freud's diagram of the human psyche: what wonderful machine will they be able to construct on the basis of the compartments labelled ego, id and super-ego, with their "resistances" and "suppressors" and mechanisms of "release."[11]

On the other hand, I enjoyed reading the Sassoon & Dale *oeuvre*, mainly because of its enthusiasm and high spirits. The school-boyishness can be a little tedious at times, especially when it takes the form of sniggering at the sexual mysticism of the *Zohar*, but on the whole, it is engaging. I liked, for example, the translation of the name of the London publisher, Duckworth, into Aramaic (bird of worth) on the front of *The Kabbalah Decoded*, together with other such mystic signs. The attempts at providing technological etymologies for some of the theosophic terms are sometimes quite hilarious: for example, "Ancient of Days (*atiq yomin*)" is translated as "Removable One of the Tanks." Some of the conceptions are richly comic: for example, the idea that circumcision was instituted in order to imitate, for magical purposes, the smooth mouth of the tap (or "penis") of the Manna-Machine, and that the ritual of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement (or "day of wiping down the machine") consisted in displaying his circumcised penis to the machine in the hope of inducing it to resume its Manna-giving operations. It seems a

---

[8] A man (the High Priest) entering a secret room from the outside is a good image for sexual intercourse. But a tap discharging within a room is not a good image of sexual intercourse. It is a good image, however, of masturbation: an interesting and significant result of the mechanisation of mysticism.

[9] *Bereshith Rabbah,* 3: 7.

[10] Prague, 1923. Langer, who wrote the classic work on Hasidism, *Nine Gates*, was a friend of Franz Kafka, and taught him Hebrew.

[11] Sassoon & Dale's reductionism extends to areas beyond the Machine. For example, at the beginning of GHA, Rabbi Simeon says to his disciples, "The days are short and the creditors are pressing." Even if ignorant of the Talmudic source of this saying (*Avot,* 2: 15, slightly misquoted), any person sensitive to metaphor must surely realise that the "creditors" here are God and Duty. Sassoon & Dale's explanation, however, is that the society of mystics were short of funds and Rabbi Simeon was appealing for contributions.

And to think that George Sassoon's father was a poet!

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pity to introduce sober, factual considerations: e.g. circumcision was a widespread custom, in the Near East and elsewhere, long before the Israelites made their Exodus from Egypt.

WHAT PARTICULARLY enthralled me, however, was the demonstration of how reductionism and hard-headed, no-nonsense empiricism turn inevitably into fantasy.

Rejecting as wild-eyed and woolly the usual mystical interpretations of the *Zohar*, the authors end up with a dream quite beyond the credulity of the maddest theosophist—the visit of a space-ship from a civilisation many light-years distant from the earth (the journey could be accomplished by means of gravity-power and a judicious use of relativity time-theory), and the delivery of a Manna-Machine adapted from a type of food-producing machine used in space-travel. The authors have, obviously, provided a miniature model of the progress of modern science, from the axiom that "entities are not to be multiplied needlessly" to the proliferation of Big Bangs, Black Holes, Anti-Matter, and all the other terrifying items of modern scientific terminology, in comparison with which the mythologies and demonologies of the ancient world seem tame, unimaginative, and soothing. Part of the authors' descent into fantasy consists in their assessment of the antiquity of the contents of the *Zohar*. Though they admit that the redaction of the *Zohar* took place in the Middle Ages, they are convinced that it contains almost intact the original manual of the Machine, dating back to the time of the Exodus. Here they endorse, in a way, the claims of the most devout adherents of the Kabbalah, but collide with the findings of modern scholarship. In fact, the parts of the *Zohar* translated by Sassoon & Dale are *wholly* medieval in their systematisation of theosophic ideas derived from non-Jewish and Jewish sources such as Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, Hekhalot mysticism, and anthropomorphic mysticism of the *Shiur Komah* school.

A POSSIBLE BONUS from the authors' hard work is that they have thought deeply and expertly about the construction of a food-making machine by which large quantities of life-sustaining food could be produced from a few grammes of algae. Cheap atomic power would be needed, and also some improvements in laser design. But before many years of research have passed, I quite expect to see the Sassoon & Dale Manna-Machine in full operation, solving perhaps the food-problems of the Third World's undeveloped countries. If this happens, it will not be the first time in the history of science that some important and useful discovery has been made as a by-product of a research-project which, in itself, was quite dotty. After all, the notebooks of Kepler reveal that his work on the motions of the planets was motivated by a private religion of sun-worship.

MEANWHILE, THE NAGGING QUESTION still remains. Is there something about Zoharic mysticism which invites this kind of treatment? Is not all mysticism, to some extent, guilty of reducing the personal encounter between man and God into a matter of wheels and pulleys: i.e. a technique, instead of an unpredictable meeting?

Mysticism is always liable to degenerate into magic; and this was indeed the fate of the Kabbalah, which began as a noble enquiry into the workings of God's grace, and ended as a collection of petty tricks and superstitions, a field for charlatans and manipulators.

It is interesting to reflect, however, that it is just at this point of transition between mysticism and magic that science develops. Science has far more in common with the mystical side of religion, from which it is indeed in great part derived, than with the rational side of religion, which has to do with freedom, moral choice and communal living, not with the acquisition of a formula for power over the universe.

The *Zohar* represented, in some measure, a surrender to the irrational, and an imbalancing of the equilibrium of Judaism. Yet for all its paranoid schematising and juggling with words, it drew from unconscious levels surrealistic dream-like insights which refreshed the springs of the Jewish civilisation. In our times, we may find particularly relevant the Zoharic criticism of the patriarchal principle, and its insistence on the female element in the Divine. The distinctive idea of the *Zohar*—that the Messianic era can arise only through the true sexual union of male and female—is one which D. H. Lawrence and Wilhelm Reich would have applauded. The Sassoon & Dale theory is, I am afraid, preposterous. But I happen to be inclined to welcome any theory, however eccentric, which is based on a close reading of the *Zohar*, and may lead people to investigate this most curious and enigmatic field of study.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stewart Conn

Bedtime Story

"I don't like that one, Hansel
And Gretel, I told them so, little
Children enticed by a wicked witch
Into her marzipan cottage—such
Goings-on—too fearsome
For words, just before bedtime
Too: keep them up half the night."

They recognise her plight,
Interpret it differently:
Grandma would be upset, you see
They confide later, out of tact,
It's the old woman who is cooked!

Peter Redgrove

Goods-Trains, Bads-Trains

Twenty-nine iron wagons full of clean stone.
The Railway is a beautiful metal
Staffed by sincere men
Who wear their uniforms handsomely.
The seamed face of the driver is a map
With the railways clearly marked.
His assistant has his grasp on the throttle.
The clean stone is going to be shaved
Into facings for nurseries, for swimming-baths,
Or some disinterested sculptor has ordered it
To enter, chiselling out his life's work.
There are no partings on this railway,
Only deliveries and meetings.
But when we are all met together
There must be another railway that takes us apart:
Lichened freight, that is already written with dates,
Insincere uniforms, with rucked seams, a driver
With longer experience whose face-bone shows no map,
The rail-irons a clanging skeleton over all England.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHRISTMAS

IS

Encounter

GIFT TIME

Yes, every year hundreds of readers choose a year's subscription to ENCOUNTER as the perfect, sure-to-please Christmas present for their friends and relatives. And it's rather more than a Christmas present, because every month for a whole year the recipient is reminded of your thoughtfulness and good wishes, wherever he or she may be.

And here's something else into the bargain! Every gift subscription will cost you **at least 25% less than the current subscription rate.** This includes postage, packing, an announcement card—so we save you a lot of trouble too. Overleaf you'll find a convenient order form. Please return this to us, with payment, well before Christmas. The only stipulations we have to make are that you do not include people you know to be buying ENCOUNTER already or use the reduced rate for your own subscription.

THIS OFFER CLOSES ON JANUARY 12th, 1979

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHRISTMAS GIFT ORDER FORM

REDUCED RATES FOR NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS

Gift subscriptions will start with the January 1979 issue, posted shortly before Christmas. Time permitting, a specially designed card announcing your gift will reach the recipient by Christmas Day. This special offer, which is not intended for your own subscription, closes on January 12th, 1979.

YOUR NAME **My name and address is as follows:**

Name.....

Address.....

.....

YOUR GIFTS **Please enter Christmas gift subscriptions for the following:**
BLOCK LETTERS THROUGHOUT PLEASE

Name ..... Name .....

Address ..... Address .....

....

....

Sign Gift Card from..... Sign Gift Card from.....

Name ..... Name .....

Address ..... Address .....

....

....

Sign Gift Card from..... Sign Gift Card from.....

Extra gifts can be ordered on a separate sheet of paper

PAYMENT **Enclose payment with this form** **NOV**

The cost of each subscription is £7.50 (UK & Europe), $15.75 seamail or $19.50 air-speeded (USA & Canada), £8.75 elsewhere. Dollar cheques, sterling cheques and postal orders can be accepted; if you can only pay separately by money order or bank transfer, please give details of the arrangements you have made. A receipt will not be sent unless requested.

Encounter: 59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS, England

To avoid damaging your magazine cut out along this line.

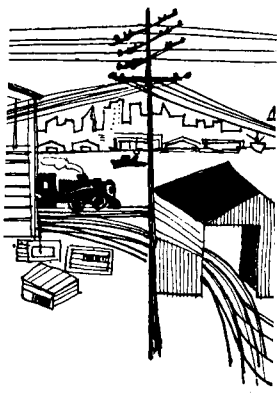
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES & TOPICS

Zuckerman's Bomb

World War II Strategy

By Charles P. Kindleberger



LORD ZUCKERMAN'S autobiography, *From Apes to Warlords*,[1] consists in large measure of a defence of the Bombing Strategy he advocated in World War II, and an attack on those who differed from it at the time and afterward. As one who is mentioned in opposition, more than once, it may be appropriate to present one of the alternative strategies and its rationalisation with a little more sympathetic understanding than Lord Zuckerman, naturally enough, is able to muster. In particular, it may be helpful for the historical record to note some of the inconsistencies in the Zuckerman *plaidoyer*.

The discussion is limited to what I know, the debate over how best to bombard France from the air so as to support the *Overlord* operation of effecting a solid landing on the Continent. This is not the only issue addressed in the book. Bomber Command of the Royal Air Force wanted to defeat Germany by itself, i.e. without the necessity of invasion. The United States Air Forces, in their turn, were committed to the landing, but were interested in minimising tactical support in favour of the strategic mission of destroying the German economy. Part of the Zuckerman case, especially in the bombing of Germany, is strategic rather than tactical: it involves a choice between the bombardment of synthetic oil as a system as against German transportation for economic reasons. In fact toward the end of the campaign Zuckerman reverts from tactical to strategic bombing, insisting on transportation targets deep in Germany rather than those west of the Rhine in close support of 12th and 21st Army Groups.

The autobiography is in many ways a fascinating document, recounting in detail Solly Zuckerman's rise to scientific distinction at an early age; his impressive accomplishments for the Ministry of Home Security in the analysis of the effects of German bombing on the human body; and his association with the scientific, military, and to some extent literary great and near-great, not without abundant name-dropping and first-naming. In discussion of the tactics for bombing in support of the cross-channel landing, Zuckerman tries to make a distinction between the empirical, scientific case which he represents and the *a priori*, unsupported case of the economists. (It should be noted that the economists' position in many respects was developed by military figures, especially Air Commodore Sidney Bufton of the Air Ministry and Colonel Richard d'Oyly Hughes, of the United States Strategic Air Force (USSTAF) in Europe, commanded by General Spaatz.)

THE AMERICAN ECONOMISTS belonged to a little group called the "Enemy Objectives Unit" in the Economic Warfare Division of the Embassy, working with a group in the British Ministry of Economic Warfare headed by Oliver Lawrence. We were on detached duty from the Office of Strategic Services and the Board of Economic Warfare (and included an impressive number of economists of whom the best known, later, were Carl Kaysen, and Walt W. Rostow, both of whom at different times coordinated economic policy in the White House). We started out by developing a theory of strategic bombardment for use by USSTAF, committed to daylight pinpoint bombing of target systems which would reduce the capacity of German ground forces to resist an Allied invasion. Area bombing of cities to affect morale, or bombing of fundamental economic systems like transport or electricity generation were rejected as too far behind the fighting front to affect the outcome of the invasion. German fighter aircraft production and ball-bearings were chosen as systems designed to make the German *Luftwaffe* defend in the air. In the event, no interruption developed to output

CHARLES P. KINDLEBERGER *is Professor of Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He served in the Office of Strategic Services in Washington DC from 1942–44, and as Intelligence Officer to the 12th Army Group from 1944–45.*

[1] *From Apes to Warlords*. By SOLLY ZUCKERMAN. Hamish Hamilton, £7.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of airplanes, nor any shortage of bearings, but the German Air Force spent its pilots in defence of their industries and was unable to prevent the Allied Air Forces from dominating the sky over the beaches on D-day. And the next strategic target was always designed to be oil, to slow the mobility of the German ground and air forces.

IN EARLY 1944, perhaps January, Colonel Hughes came to us in Berkeley Square to ask us to think how the US strategic forces should be used tactically to support the invasion. When he returned in a few days, I said we had a plan, and he said he had one. The two plans turned out to be identical.

The purpose was to destroy railroad and road bridges in a circle around the Normandy lodgment area, with enough diversionary bridges to disguise the landing sites. This involved a string of bridges from the mouth of the Seine to Paris, and along the Loire from Nantes to about Orleans, plus selected viaducts and bridges on the few other lines running from the Paris *ceinture* to Normandy. After discussion with operational research units in the Air Forces (and with the bomb-damage assessment group under the Ministry of Home Security at Princes Risborough), we believed that bridges could be destroyed with a moderate concentration of aircraft, and that the destruction of a span of more than 120 feet would take three weeks to repair—as contrasted with the ordinary bomb crater on running railroad track which could be made good in a maximum of four hours.

At this stage, Zuckerman returned to England from North Africa with a different proposal—to bomb railroad centres, sometimes called "marshalling yards" although he claims not to have known this designation—in an effort to reduce the capacity of the railroad system as a whole. Zuckerman had made a reputation as a scientific adviser on bombing when Pantelleria surrendered after Allied Air Forces had dropped on it the weight of bombs he recommended (20,000 tons). In his book, he explains with complete honesty how he calculated the weight of bombs needed to knock out given batteries and guns, observes that the batteries ceased firing not because of bomb damage but because their Italian crews had fled, and takes great pleasure (as who would not?) from the reputation as a wizard that the success gained him, and especially how taken Sir Arthur Tedder became. But the account speaks more to Zuckerman's serendipity than to his science, since Pantelleria's surrender occurred at the right moment for the wrong reason.

When he went ashore in Sicily, Zuckerman was enormously impressed by the damage done to ports and especially to their railroad facilities. Called upon to advise on the bombing of Italy, he extrapolated Sicily to Italy—and, with the help of subsequent ground studies, to France and later to Germany—insisting with respect to all his subsequent advice that it was scientific and empirical, in contrast with the *a priori* recommendations of the economists.

BUT SCIENCE RESTS on controlled experiments, not observation of separate events in isolation. The Italian railroad service was less than enthusiastic in its repair efforts on behalf of the Germans. Italy has a long, thin shape, with parallel railroad lines, as contrasted with the French hexagon. It was a serious mistake of Zuckerman to insist that railroad bridges could not be destroyed, as shown by Italian experience, when it was not tried.

It is fair to say that experienced warriors from one theatre moving to another and telling them "how to do it" are not necessarily welcome. Montgomery's "sandy boys" were detested in England by the local army units whom they sought to push aside when they reached London. Zuckerman characterises me as "an intensely serious and hostile young man" (p. 228) and again as "young" and "supported by [along with Oliver Lawrence] their equally academic and inexperienced staffs"—"theoreticians" whose logic [was] unrelated to practical experience" (p. 356). Youth is hard to apologise for, especially when in his earlier passages on his work in comparative zoology, Zuckerman glories in his success at an early age. The hostility, if that is not too strong a word, is explained as a reaction to the perhaps inevitable arrogance of the veteran toward the tyro. The intense seriousness would seem to be called for since this was a serious matter on which lives depended.

Zuckerman's account of the meeting of 25 February 1944 to which he states Lawrence and I were "uninvited guests" differs from my recollection. (I should perhaps say that I am writing this from memory, using this book by Zuckerman, but not his *Scientists and War* (1966), and without the benefit of records of my own or a study of official histories to which he takes such serious exception, and I may well be in error in detail.) The central point came out, however, after Zuckerman asked the British railroad "practical men" at this meeting how they would like it if the German Air Force dropped a thousand tons of bombs on their yards; and they had said they would not like it at all. When I asked how long would it take before they could get a train through, the reply was "a few hours."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BATTLE OVER appropriate strategy went on through March and April until a very important event occurred on 6 May. Until that time the directive to the support air forces had forbidden (as I understood it) attacks on bridges. We understood this to be because Zuckerman thought that it was impossible to destroy bridges —from the air? or only with heavy bombers?— although he now asserts that this belief of his was a "trivial part of the argument" whereas the Enemy Objectives Unit had so deluded itself that after the War it believes it to have been central. In any event, on 6 May, General Frederick Smith directed a squadron of 14 fighter-bombers against the railroad bridge across the Seine at Vernon in violation of his orders. Six planes aborted; the eight remaining planes dropped the bridge into the river. A new directive was issued, and the E.O.U. plan of pushing back the railheads from the battle was launched.

Zuckerman acknowledges that by the time of the invasion all Seine and road bridges were down and 10 others as far east as Liège in Belgium—he seems to be unaware of the Loire aspects of the programme—had been bombed by fighter- and medium-bombers, and reported damaged or destroyed for what seems in retrospect a "trivial effort." Unless my recollection is altogether faulty, the heavy bombers participated fully in the attacks. The Zuckerman story is obscure in these passages, but there is no suggestion that bridges were originally banned presumably because they were too difficult to hit, that the Vernon bridge was destroyed easily, and that with this new empirical result the *a priori* programme of the economists was put into effect.

It is one of the ironies of history that General Smith should have picked the Vernon bridge because it really did not go anywhere. The railroad crossed the Seine to a station, but did not connect up with the main lines east of the river—although a fairly limited construction effort could have made the connection.

A more serious irony of history is that Nature does not conduct controlled experiments. Frequently when protagonists have long debated alternative courses of action, decision is taken to do both, so that it is impossible to tell in retrospect which course was right. In addition to "bridges" versus "marshalling yards" one can cite the British debate in 1931 on whether to raise tariffs or devalue sterling; or that at the time of Bretton Woods, when John Williams favoured key-currency revival of sterling first, whereas White and Keynes wanted to restore all currencies at once through the International Monetary Fund.

I leave aside a discussion of the later bombardment of Germany, in which Zuckerman favoured attacking more "marshalling yards" for strategic reasons, as opposed to synthetic oil which was in acutely short tactical supply. He is right that after a time the distinction between strategic and tactical bombing diminishes; but the ground forces, for whom I was by this time working, still wanted to push back railheads more than they wanted to reduce steel production which would go into weapons only the following year.

THE EVIDENCE Lord Zuckerman amasses on the efficacy of railroad-centre bombing in France, and the unimportance of cutting the Seine, is thoroughly unpersuasive to this partisan. A study of the enemy retreat from the Falaise-Argentan gap showed that 90% of the enemy vehicles and 70% of the tanks that reached the Seine heading east succeeded in crossing it (p. 282). If this is meant to imply that the road and rail bridges added little to German capacity to manoeuvre from one side of the Seine to the other in good fighting trim, the conclusion is incredible. A chart derived from French railroad statistics (p. 299) showed that overall railroad traffic had fallen from 100 in January 1944 to 20 in July. Zuckerman finds this very exciting, but it was what the economists had said all along: French civilian traffic was a cushion which would protect German military traffic. And the chart shows that military and even passenger trains were a small proportion of the total, and declined much less, contrary to Zuckerman's claims.

Zuckerman is probably right in not quoting Colonel Höffner. Höffner served in the spring of 1944 as *General des Transportwesens West*—chief railroad-officer under Marshal von Rundstedt; he was ambitious to become a general, and to do this had to serve six months with troops in the field, which led to his capture. The 9th US Air Force PW interrogation team, led by Colonel Eric Warburg, asked him what he thought about Bridges-*vs*-Marshalling Yards. I helped to frame the questions (and while I tried consciously not to prejudice the answers, it may well be that I did). In the American report Colonel Höffner was much more concerned about the destroyed bridges than about the damage to locomotives and goods-wagons in general. But the British reacted strongly against this verdict, re-interrogated the colonel, and emerged in due course with the opposite conclusion. Like the railroad experts at the meeting of 25 February where I was an uninvited guest, the German expert's answers depended upon the way the question was framed, even if he was not consciously trying to supply the answer he deemed was being sought.

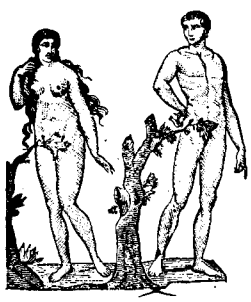
I CONCLUDE THAT the worst evidence against the Zuckerman case is that he tries so hard to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

make it. He protests too much. The law of historical alternatives suggests to me that it is impossible to be certain about causation. If he consciously insists so much, it seems to me likely that subconsciously he may be entertaining a suspicion that he was wrong.

Fictions of Academe

Dons & Realities—By GEORGE WATSON



ACADEME is an odd subject for fiction. A university, after all, is a place for students who have barely started to live, and professors who have done all (or nearly all) the living they are ever likely to do.

And yet the spate of academic plays and novels goes on: the nearest thing English fiction has had to a new subject since 1945. The theatres are full of it. On the last three occasions when, eager to shake off a taint of the academic, I have travelled from Cambridge to London to see a new play, or at least one new to me, they have all turned out to be about universities—an experience that makes you wonder if it was worth leaving the gates of your college. There is Michael Frayn's *Donkey's Years,* a brisk farce about the wife of a college master not quite having it off with an old flame during an Old Boys' reunion; Simon Gray's *Otherwise Engaged,* which is set in London, indeed, but where the references to Oxford and Cambridge are embarrassingly numerous; and Tom Stoppard's *Jumpers,* a parody of an academic lecture accurate enough to be worth resenting.

The university novel, meanwhile, stumbles on. It has its 19th-century forbears: but it started what by now looks like its continuous life with C. P. Snow's *The Masters* in 1951 and Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* two years later.[1] Since the 1950s, academe has provided fiction with a major theme for the first time in our literary history: William Cooper's *Struggles of Albert Woods* (1953), Angus Wilson's *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes* (1956), and a fistful of novels by David Lodge and Malcolm Bradbury—both of whom are professors of English in real life, if reality it be. The species is by now old enough to have engendered its own little breed of nostalgia: Philip Larkin, now a university librarian at Hull, has recently reissued *Jill* (1946), his first novel, with an introduction (1975) about what undergraduate life in War-time Oxford was like and how he first came to meet Kingsley Amis there; and Malcolm Bradbury, in a new introduction (1976) to his first novel, *Eating People Is Wrong* (1959), has told what it felt like to be a first-generation student in a civic university like Leicester in the 1950s, puzzled and fascinated as a newcomer with the liberal values of an unknown style of life. And nostalgia has fuelled two recent collections of essays, *My Oxford* and *My Cambridge* (1977), assembling undergraduate reminiscences for a public apparently insatiable in its thirst for revelations about university life, whether literary or sexual.

The phenomenon is Anglo-American, and hardly shared by our continental allies. Americans have had it for about as long, as Mary McCarthy's *Groves of Academe* (1952) and Randall Jarrell's *Pictures from an Institution* (1954) demonstrate—a fact powerfully confirmed by the play and film of Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?.* In the 1950s and 1960s, and for the first time, universities suddenly became at once hot news and the main stuff of fiction. It is a mood that may have faded, though revivals of *Jumpers* suggest it has not simply faded away. A. Alvarez, better known as a poet and critic, produced his first novel in 1974 when he was in his late forties; it was called *Hers,* and its hero is a sort of young Jewish D. H. Lawrence who satisfies the neglected wife of his professor before deciding to quit academe forever. (It is an established fictional convention that the professor is better at footnotes than in bed.) Most people who read, it is now probable, have either been to a university themselves, or have a close relative who has: the first age in history of which this could be said, even though Britain remains the only considerable nation in the industrial West *not* to have yielded to the tempta-

[1] See: George Saintsbury, "Novels of University Life", *Macmillan's Magazine* (1898); Mortimer R. Proctor, *The English University Novel* (Berkeley, 1957).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of mass higher education.[2] It may be true that universities have recently suffered in funds and in prestige. But they still have a terribly permanent air about them, even the newest, and it would be unrealistic to suppose they could simply fold up or go away.

LET ME MAKE MY OWN GENERAL VIEW clear at the start. I hope, as well as believe, that universities will survive and prosper; I draw my own academic salary, diminished as it lately is in real value, with a good conscience, and encourage pupils to draw their grants in a similar spirit. When it comes to Academe, I am for it, groves and all. On the other hand, I have several reasons, all partly selfish, for hoping that Anglo-American campus fiction will fade away and die.

For one thing, it cannot be good for universities, or any other institutions one can easily think of outside politics, to operate under a blaze of glamourising publicity. For another, the very nature of that publicity, which is critical but still titillating, may (as Sex Education is credibly reported to have done) weaken a taste for the real thing. It may also cause disappointment in the young; I am haunted by the fear that many a freshman expects a university to be more than it is and more than it can reasonably hope to be.

And then again, my deepest convictions urge that there is something wrong with a literature in which universities are felt to be consumingly interesting; I hear myself murmur, with Coriolanus, that there is a world elsewhere. When I challenge friends and colleagues, in the interval of *Jumpers* or any similar play, with my own troubled sense that public interest in academe is vastly overdone, they assure me that this is simply a fact of the age we live in. Universities, the wife of a colleague remarked the other day, "are the only communities left in the modern world." A remark like that is enough to spoil anybody's evening. If it is really true, as I desperately hope it is not, then it is a judgment on the age that Jeremiah might have hesitated to loose. Is our sense of community really so impoverished that universities are all there is?

A BACKWARD GLANCE may help to create a sense of perspective. Of course university fiction did not literally begin with Snow and Amis a quarter-of-a-century ago. The Victorians had their occasional farces on the subject, like *Mr Verdant Green* and *Charley's Aunt,* as well as thoughtful novels about young clergymen losing their faith. And it is common enough for the hero of a Victorian novel, like Thackeray's Pendennis or Trollope's John Caldigate, to spend a chapter or two in an ancient seat of learning, sometimes idling, or falling in debt or in love, before he leaves for the world that really counts. Like Thackeray himself, and many others down to the Second World War, he can depart without taking a degree. That phrase, common as it is in the *Dictionary of National Biography,* is already impressively archaic in its implications. Nowadays we call those who do that "drop-outs." The career of Evelyn Waugh, who tippled his way through three years of Oxford undergraduate life before utterly failing to satisfy the examiners, is no longer encouraged in an age where the Exchequer foots the bill. Indeed it is barely possible. Even heirs to thrones now sit exams and pass them, which is more than Edward VII or George VI troubled to do; and the United Kingdom now looks ready to greet, at some future day, its first graduate monarch.

Nobody can say that universities are not behaving seriously. The fact is that the college life depicted by Evelyn Waugh in his first novel, *Decline and Fall* (1928), no longer exists. I do not call that immortal little book a university novel, since it merely begins and ends in academe. Its central assumption is nearer to *Pendennis* than to *Lucky Jim*, and by now dated enough to be interesting: that nobody but a complete muff would bother with a university at all, except as a swift passage from school to real life, and that anyone who remains in one is an existential failure. The university was a place for well-born idlers, on the one hand, and solemnly assiduous scholarship-boys on the other, and that system lasted right down to the 1940s. I am just old enough to remember the end of it. But by the 1960s it was so remote that it was hard to persuade students it had ever existed. How could we explain, to that passionate generation, that there had once been a time when statesmen like Disraeli or Churchill did not bother with a university at all, and with only passing regrets, and when other notabilities like Sir Thomas Beecham left of their own accord after a year or two because there was "no one there worth talking to"?

Nobody can understand the vogue for university fiction in the 1950s and '60s without understanding the vogue for academe itself. By now, I suspect, that vogue is withering, as we return to something a little nearer the Victorian condition. Whether because high prices make work necessitous, or because a collective hysteria is fading, there are once again intelligent young people who prefer on leaving school not to enter

[2] The total number of those in Higher Education in 1976-77 was 519,000, of which the estimated proportion of working-class students applying was 25%.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a university. But that view, in the first flourishing time of the university novel, was rare to the point of being almost inconceivable. The world of C. P. Snow's *Masters* and Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* is based on one enormous and unspoken premise: that any intelligent person would go to a university if he had the choice.

TO EXPLAIN THAT MOOD, which already looks remote, one needs to examine the claims then made by the professoriate itself, and made in a calm expectation of acceptance. Student militancy in the 1960s was a solemn parody of donnish pretensions in the 1950s. It is only because the middle-aged looked and sounded powerful that the young conceived there was power to be had in academic committees; and it was only when they won the right to sit on those committees that they discovered their mistake. There *is* no power in universities, in any serious sense of that word: only a facsimile of power. In the wider world of affairs, they are charmingly impotent institutions, dependent on pleasing others to survive at all.

But dons looked powerful in the 1950s, and plainly saw universities as cockpits of intellectual influence. This was the decade that spawned the media-don. A New York philosopher once told me how, walking across the campus of Columbia University, Lionel Trilling had turned to him and remarked: "You know, I have power . . . ." It was an accurate remark in those years, soon after 1945. I have visited American homes where volumes of Trilling stood on the shelves and were quoted with little less veneration than Holy Scripture a century or two earlier. An ambitious young man, entering a university during or soon after the Second World War, might easily feel he was entering an arena where power over countless minds was there for the taking, if he worked and planned for it. His mood as a freshman might resemble André Gide's silent address to the city of Paris in 1889, on the first page of his journal: "*Et maintenant, à nous deux.*"

The Lucky Jim of those days was nothing like a Pendennis. The university novel might be a study in disillusionment, but it was always a study in illusions too. All these young heroes believed, until they ceased to believe, that academe might be their working-place and their abode forever. And they believed it because their first, though fast fading, image of a don was of something more than a scholar, and certainly a world away from the comic derelicts of Victorian fiction. The don was suddenly a public figure: a voice on the Brains Trust, carried by radio or television around the globe; a prophet and pundit in Sunday newspapers; and a sage on the parental bookshelf.

HE WAS ALSO a creative artist. Perhaps this was the most surprising new possibility of all in that post-War age: that the academic need remain no mere pedant, but could dazzle the world as a Poet, Dramatist, or Novelist too. The university novel is after all largely a novel written by dons. C. P. Snow had been a scientific Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and its Senior Tutor, though by 1951 he had ceased to be a resident member of a university; but *The Masters* was supposed to lift the lid on the intrigues of college men. By the time *Lucky Jim* appeared, Kingsley Amis was a lecturer in English at Swansea, and though the novel is based on earlier and reported experience, it was widely imagined to have been built on observation; and *Eating People Is Wrong* was written by a graduate student who had observed his own mentors too closely for their own comfort and who was shortly to become a university teacher himself. The prolific fiction of Iris Murdoch, once a Fellow in Philosophy in an Oxford college, touches on academe only occasionally, but it demonstrates that the two roles were highly compatible, and that the one might take strength from the other.

In that same expansive era, many American universities appointed "Writers on Campus." A wall of suspicion had tumbled down. I do not know how many British or American academics published a novel before the Second World War under their own names—Snow himself, certainly, and my late colleague at Cambridge, F. L. Lucas, are among the few that spring to mind. But by the 1940s arts faculties in our English universities had moved out of one assumption about the creative act into another and far more arresting one. It was no longer disgraceful, or even odd, for an academic to be known to have written a poem or a novel or a play. So much the more exciting, then, to be an academic.

ONE ODD MISUNDERSTANDING about that post-War world now seems rooted in literary history, so it may be worth a moment's thought to root it out. It now seems to be widely believed, even more in the USA than in Britain, that the Angry Young Men of the 1950s were of inferior social standing to the run of Victorian or Georgian novelists and poets; and that they owed their presence in Oxford (or, less commonly, Cambridge) to the Butler Education Act of 1944.

The last part of all that, at least, must be mistaken. Whatever contributions to education and culture are owing to the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, he cannot be held responsible for Philip Larkin or Kingsley Amis. Both were undergraduates at St John's College, Oxford,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well before his Act reached the statute-book: Larkin in October 1940, and Amis months later, in April 1941, followed by John Wain in 1943. Iris Murdoch went up as early as 1938. Nor can their social origins have seemed in any way odd there. In his new introduction to *Jill*, Larkin has explained that War-time Oxford was austere with rationing and free of social distinction, the impulse being to minimise such differences. That is certainly the atmosphere I recall shortly after the War. At all events, there is nothing exceptional about our ancient universities admitting scholarship boys: they have been doing that since their medieval foundations. Myths die hard; none harder, surely, than that of Oxford and Cambridge as aristocratic preserves.

The humility of my own social origins I would prefer not to unveil, for fear they may not prove shocking enough. But a tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge of the 1930s once told me that in those pre-War years more than half his undergraduate pupils were from maintained schools or the public sector. The Butler Act formalised certain existing practices, and pushed a partly open door a little wider open still. But it was not a revolution; and it was in no way responsible for the New Novel of the '50s. Most of those novelists were already at a university; and not one of them. I may add, was of a social origin as humble as that of Charles Dickens, whose father was imprisoned for debt and who managed to be a better novelist than any of them without going to a university at all.

THE NEW ACADEMIC HERO, like his creator, had one toe in the ocean of academe, and kept the rest of himself out of it. Lucky Jim leaves that life for good at the end of the novel, convinced that its corruptions are subtler than those of money-making, and joyfully enters the world of City finance. The hero of *Hers*, 20 years later, makes a similar choice, selling off his hardbacks in a final gesture of intellectual resignation. The rash fierce blaze of academic enthusiasm did not last; and these novels, after all, are in a clearly recognisable sense autobiographical. After a dozen years at Swansea (1949–61) interrupted by a year at Princeton (1958–59), Amis tried Cambridge for two years before resigning academe altogether in 1963 for literary London. The author of *Hers*, now his near-neighbour in Hampstead, has made the same choice in abbreviated form, lecturing at times but preferring his liberty from the time-table. In all these authors, academe is something to exorcise: it needs to be lived for a time, but lived in order to demonstrate that it is ultimately unlivable. There *is* a world elsewhere.

The border-line instances are equally instructive. Philip Larkin is a university librarian, but does not teach. John Wain has spent five years as professor of poetry at Oxford—as temporary as all such professors are. And Iris Murdoch has long since resigned her teaching fellowship. The seeming exceptions are instructive too: David Lodge's *Changing Places* and Malcolm Bradbury's *History Man*, which both appeared in 1975, are by active university teachers. But the first novel is a resounding farce about an Anglo-American academic exchange where wives are swopped (and reswopped) as casually as curricula; and the second, a savage satire on a trendy-lefty sociologist in a new university, stands well beyond disillusionment, biting acidly into the heart of modern academic pretension. The fiercest sceptics of academe are no longer those who leave it. But why, one cannot help wondering, did the author of *Lucky Jim* wait more than ten years before following his own hero to the metropolis?

AS UNIVERSITIES are brought within a sense of scale, with cuts and perhaps more cuts, we may expect their fictions to fade with them, though the old and the middle-aged may still choose to write of their remembered youth. Meanwhile, these fictions offer a sizeable charge-sheet against the institutions we know, or have recently known. I believe them to be seriously plausible charges; and will distinguish three, in mounting order of gravity.

1. The sin of Pygmalion. Those who teach sometimes suffer from a professional deformation of wanting their pupils to resemble themselves. The illusion has its farcial aspects, if you pause to consider what a whole nation of dons would look like. "There was one allowance they never under any circumstances made", remarked Randall Jarrell of his colleagues in *Pictures from an Institution*: "that the students might be right about something, and they wrong." Lucky Jim's exploitation by his ruthless professor is Amis's version of the same point.

Lucky Jug

London

KINGSLEY AMIS'S *new novel is published by Hutchinson on Monday and he was sanguine about its chances when I spoke to him yesterday.*

"You can never tell", he told me. "When 'Lucky Jim' came out I thought it might sell a couple of thousand copies, but only in Britain. Later, a Yugoslav professor told me he was teaching it to his students as being most relevant to life under Tito."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

2. Hypocrisy. Does the enlightened don really mean what he says? His style of life does little to suggest it. The Lefter your views, the higher and fatter you live: that is the burden of *The History Man*, the most withering exposure of academic hypocrisy since *The Groves of Academe*.

3. Righteousness. A sage cannot afford to be wrong. And our universities—or at least their most vocal and highly publicised elements—were publicly wrong in the 1960s about public events. There can be little appeal in history against that collective hysteria that was once called the New Left. Violence-worship among intellectuals is not a fact to be forgotten or excused. Few among the young, it is true, knew they were being manipulated by middle-aged professionals hell-bent on promotion. They were easy fodder. But the spectacle is one that ordinary men will not quickly forget or forgive.

Our intelligentsia, to speak bluntly, has a lot of egg on its face. It can choose now to distance its indignation through farce, as in *Jumpers* or *Changing Places*; or blur it with cynicism; or pretend that nothing really happened. But a memory of the 1960s lingers guiltily on. Those who shouted then, all shouted for Dictatorship and the glamour of the gun: the rest failed to shout at all. The moral purity of violence—that was the greatest of all the fictions and falsehoods that academe once took to its heart, and from which it must now find its painful way back to a world of rational debate and tolerant hearts.

"Solzhenitsyn's Children"

A Year of the "New Philosophers"

Letter from Paris—By FRANÇOIS BONDY

A YEAR OR SO AGO reports suddenly appeared in European newspapers and magazines about a new post-Sartre trend in France, an intellectual and ideological change of climate among those young Frenchmen who had been conspicuous as militants in May 1968. We were told of surprisingly large sales of books written by authors aged about thirty who frequently spoke and debated on radio and television or wrote in *Le Monde* and *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*. Not only did they repudiate Stalinism—that would have raised no eyebrows since *L'Humanité*, the French Communist party newspaper, uses "Stalinist" as a word of abuse (curiously directed at their socialist rivals)—and Leninism (approved by French Maoists among whom had been many of the "new philosophers"), but they repudiated even Marxism itself—and not merely the misinterpreted, misused, latter-day "Vulgar Marxism" but that of Karl Marx himself. André Glucksmann (aged 42), the oldest and most successful author of this group, described Marxism as a "tyrannical concept", which presented itself as revolutionary, libertarian, and emancipatory but had become the opposite, not by chance but as a result of its own inner logic. It is what Raymond Aron, under whom André Glucksmann had studied, had called "The Opium of the Intellectuals" twenty-five years earlier—an allusion, of course, to Marx's definition of religion as "the opium of the people."

Is there a group, a school, of "new philosophers"? This question, frequently asked a year ago, has again become topical today with the appearance in various translations of André Glucksmann's most publicised book, *Les Maîtres Penseurs*, and the even more brilliant one by Bernard-Henri Lévy, the "condottiere" of the "new philosophers", entitled *La Barbarie à visage humain*. The question now is whether this is, and will remain, a specifically French phenomenon. This would be understandable in the light of certain persistent disputes and long-lingering crises among the French left-wing intellectuals, and, after all, there is always something "new" coming out of Paris—a "*nouvelle vague*" of films (such a long time ago), a "*nouveau roman*" and now the *"noueau philosophes."* Is this rapid succession of new trends merely a new fashion with an eye to the market place or is it the hectic expression of more profound developments?

IN THE FIRST PLACE the group itself: in a sense these authors all have a similar background. The autobiographical mélange includes the entrance

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

examination for the *École Normale Supérieure*, the influence of lectures by the Marxist Louis Althusser and the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan; the prestige of thinkers like Michel Foucault; and the deep impression made by Solzhenitsyn's testimony in the volumes of *The Gulag Archipelago*. The older French Marxists such as Pierre Daix and Claude Lefort have dedicated books to Solzhenitsyn, something for which there is hardly a parallel on the rest of the European Left. Jean-Marie Benoist, a leading member of Claude Lévi-Strauss' seminar, is the only one who has no memories of May 1968; he was French Cultural Attaché in London at the time but his book *Marx est mort*, published in 1970, was the start of this critical anti-Marxist literature.

Then there are the meditations of Lardreau and Jambet, two high-school teachers from Auxerre, in *L'Ange*, and Maurice Clavel's *Ce Juif Socrate*; Glucksmann's and Lévy's books are far more direct politically and are innocent of any religious or lyrical tones—do they all fall into the same category?

I have referred to a "group", not a "school" since the latter can imply solidarity in action, joint appearances in Italy or Mexico, with members assisting and promoting one another and all in concert creating a specific climate of opinion. There is here far less system or coherent content. The message of all of them is not "what we bring" but "what we bring to an end." Some attack rationalism and scientific thinking as potentially totalitarian; others use rationalist arguments against the "tyrannical concept." Occasionally the two overlap.

WHY HAVE these authors created such a sensation? Some critics, including Gilles Deleuze, have written about "a racket by the media" or "marketing", and "anti-communism promoted by the bourgeoisie." The media, however, have merely acted as a multiplication factor; they made no discoveries, invented nothing. *L'Ange*, for instance, this curious book in which there is an odd linkage between the Early Church Fathers and Mao's cultural revolution, has sold some 20,000 copies with no assistance from the reviewers. This fashion can only spring from the interest taken by so many young people in a rediscovered metaphysical longing, in romanticism, in a certain warmth of feeling. All these authors, whatever may be their sometimes questionable background, turned out to be highly gifted polemicists. Left-wing newspapers such as *Le Nouvel Observateur* gave them space to reply to attacks from the traditional Left, and their rough-and-ready counter-arguments were frequently more convincing than their fine theories. They were, of course, attacked as blasphemers and renegades, but their questions about the mechanics of real power under socialism and the validity of the dissidents' testimony concerning the repressive structures of Communist states as a whole were not answered but were simply written off as inopportune. Even a pamphlet in the paperback series *Idées* attacking the "new philosophers" merely stoked the debate. The young veterans of May 1968 remained coolly unimpressed by the hoary old epithets (i.e. "grist for the mills of reaction"). André Glucksmann had already dealt with this in his earlier book *La Cuisinière et le Mangeur d'hommes*. The theory he developed in that book of a connection between the revolt of May 1968 and Solzhenitsyn's protest has become one of the group's common denominators. It is the fruit of experiences among which may be reckoned the crisis of Stalinism and then of Maoism.

Discussions abroad have overlooked the fact that sundry left-wing political journalists have come forward with similar and frequently more systematic dissents. Among them are Jacques Julliard, Marcel Gaucher, and Marc Paillet. They voiced criticism of the Left's "Common Programme", cast doubt on the advantages of nationalisation and referred—admittedly, in the style of Djilas—to a "new class" of high-ranking officials, the directors of nationalised industries and even of the cultural apparatus, all building up their own empires in the name of the "proletariat." Didn't the class interests of these new potentates merit a Marxist analysis? This has been debated in newspapers and in heated public discussions and may well have played a part in the change of climate which contributed to the narrow defeat of the Left at the polls. In those same months in which senior servants of the State discovered that their Establishment hearts were really with the socialists, i.e. with tomorrow's probable victors, this criticism carried weight because there was no question of conformism or ambition playing any part in it. Anyone who overlooks or underestimates the political effect of the new intellectual polemicists is liable to miss the point. The conclusion in one of the first really well-informed accounts of it (Jean Amery in *Merkur* of November 1977) is disputable: "If France's intellectuals are no longer left-wing intellectuals, I do not see what message to the world could still come out of Paris. . . ." Amery went on to betray the fear that "ex-Left-wing resignation might spill over into neighbouring countries, particularly Germany."

I WILL RETURN later to this forecast. For the moment attention should be turned to the remarkable dual relationship between the young group and the older generation of intellectuals.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mention has already been made of Raymond Aron, whom the Left grudgingly respect as a major intellectual force. The rediscovery of Boris Souvarine's work on Stalin, unobtainable for decades, created a great stir, as did the research into Leninism of Alain Besançon, the historian. *Arguments*, the critical Marxist review of the 1950s, whose driving force was the sociologist Edgar Morin, was reprinted. Much attention was given to the impious books on China by Simon Leys. Jean-François Revel deserves mention for his *La Tentation totalitaire* with its Voltairean verve. Claude Lefort, formerly editor of the Marxist periodical *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, has also had a significant influence with his new books.

From such veterans the young authors have learnt much that squares with their experiences and their thirst for an intellectual summing-up. Perhaps the influence of Albert Camus has been the greatest on content as on style. In addition, however, there are older-generation authors and thinkers who have been sucked into the wake of the "new philosophers" and have no wish to be left behind in a development which is arousing the young. Philippe Sollers and Julie Kristeva, editors of the magazine *Tel Quel*, who previously extolled Maoism in flowery phrases, have now identified themselves with the group. *Tel Quel*, of course, had earlier published articles by Solzhenitsyn. At a meeting of left-wingers including dissidents from the East which gathered in Venice in autumn 1977 before the "Biennale of Dissent", Louis Althusser took up the whole question, so neglected on the Left, of big government and political repression. He, the communist theorist, had hitherto taught people exactly how to read Marx and properly to understand *Das Kapital*; now for the first time he referred to the "near-impossibility of finding a satisfactory Marxist explanation for a history which, after all, has been made in the name of Marxism. . . ." He detected a yawning gap in Marxism: "We must say openly that there is no Marxist theory of the State." Not only was this said by Althusser in public but it was said for the first time. Nevertheless the "new philosophers" had put their finger precisely on this point before him. It was a striking illustration of the established Left forced to face a problem as a result of new ideological pressures. When the group of "Left-wing anti-communists" held a reception for East European dissidents at the same time as President Giscard d'Estaing was receiving Leonid Brezhnev, Jean-Paul Sartre, who had hitherto ridiculed dissidence as bourgeois gutter-press humbug, turned up; yet the Paris revival of his old play *Nekrasov* went on as if nothing had happened.

THERE IS, THEREFORE, two-way traffic; the older militants, historians and thinkers influence the young authors and, in reverse direction, these authors and their success influence the veterans who have no wish to be left behind but to be where the youth is. In the light of this to-ing and fro-ing the question whether the new Paris essayists should still rank as "Left-wing intellectuals" and therefore have something to tell the world is hardly the most relevant. In an earlier phase of his work Maurice Merleau-Ponty produced a subtle justification for the Moscow Trials (he changed his mind later), and Sartre then was full of anxious concern about the precise distance from, or proximity to, the Communist party that it was correct and authentic to maintain. Now Jean-Marie Benoist and André Glucksmann certainly have something to say, maybe quite a lot, for where contributions to an understanding of our era by the French Left intelligentsia are concerned, the 1950s were surely not a brilliant period. In spite of all their hasty conclusions and questionable arguments, in this respect the "new philosophers" need harbour no feelings of inferiority (to which they are scarcely prone in any case).

COMMITMENT to political and moral solidarity with the Dissidents has changed the climate among French left-wing intellectuals, even that of the Communist party press. *L'Humanité* once raved against Solzhenitsyn; it has not done so for a long time. Leading Communists joined with libertarians in protest demonstrations against the incarceration of the Ukrainian Plyushch in a psychiatric hospital, against the sentences on Shcharansky and Ginsburg. The difference is that the "new philosophers" and some of the Left (the magazine *Esprit*, for example) regard repression in Communist countries as a central subject whereas for the others it is an embarrassment. They have nothing to say against reporting it; it should merely not be "over-emphasised." Now that the taboo has been broken, however, and the old Communist self-censorship is no longer operative, the party thinkers have been forced on to the defensive in face of dissidence so vehemently expressed.

The two great left-wing parties of France today are entangled in reciprocal polemics and in self-criticism. The "new philosophers'" arguments have become common ground, which may detract from their power and continuing impact. The problems with which French society is now wrestling demand precise social and economic analysis rather than robust confessions of faith and argumentation. The old cult of "autonomy",

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the ruined watch-factory LIP as its model for a commitment to cooperative societies, seems a somewhat marginal pursuit.

IN ITALY the effect of the "new philosophers" has been astonishing. They have polarised and to some extent reinvigorated the debate on the Left. In Germany, *Alternative* (a West Berlin Marxist periodical) has long been to the fore in the conveyance of new French ideas and two of its numbers are worth noting. No. 16 of October 1977 is entitled "*The Intellectuals and Power*" with sub-title "*Minds Exorcised of Marxism—the so-called 'New Philosophers' in France.*" It carried four articles representing the views of the group—by André Glucksmann, Jean-Paul Dollé (one of the most important of the group), Michel Guérin, and Bernard-Henri Lévy—and a German commentary by Professor Oskar Negt putting forward tactical arguments such as the following:

> "In the Federal Republic's tense social situation the new philosophers can only reinforce legitimisation, confirming the anti-Marxist prejudice prevalent in the country."

This, however, as Negt adds, is no adequate rebuttal of what they have to say. They have, he says, separated two things of importance to the Marxist dialectic, partiality and truth and so put their finger on "one of orthodoxy's sore points." Negt then goes on to confirm rather than refute the "new philosophers" by saying:

> "For all the erudition that they have sometimes displayed, the Marxists have not said much that is relevant to the important problems of the West European transitional period."

This is tantamount to admitting that the "new philosophers" have indeed given an impulse to thought and that, to parry the attack, the older Marxists have had to go further than ever before in the process of open-minded self-criticism. Negt is convinced that Karl Marx himself can be brought to the rescue, saying that the argument concerns only "formal differences in the fulfilment of programmes set out by Marx himself." The scholastics once similarly based themselves on Aristotle—"he himself has said it." *Ipse dixit*, old conviction confronting new heresy.

No. 119 of *Alternative* for April 1978 carries the title "*Crisis of Marxism*"—without a question-mark. An editorial introduction attempts to hold a line between old theory and new theoretical departures. Clearly when someone like Louis Althusser gives vent to criticism hitherto only expressed in "uncivilised" form by the "new philosophers", it acquires a new sanctity. The most notable testimony is that of Karl-Heinz Roth, concerning, as he reports, "The profound hatred of the New Left which has grown up among many comrades" and this "on the basis of years of experience." Nicos Poulantzas is the only representative of Orthodox Marxism, which tirelessly associates "authoritarian state control" solely with the "bourgeois world."

In the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, a leading forum of left-wing opinion among German newspapers, Gerhard Zwerenz has recently taken up the cudgels with a polemical fire worthy of the French and, to judge from readers' letters, to much protest and even disgust. Zwerenz, the well-known novelist, turns on those who had neglected the French, and had not given a close reading to what they had written. The German Marxists have neither the strength nor the determination for critical self-analysis, he says; they are united only in a defence consisting of accusations against heretics.

> "We have our ideal fixed in the forefront of our minds. . . . We know everything, and we can explain it in a way no one can understand."

If the writings of these young Frenchmen have the same effect on the German ideological battle as did the French *philosophes* of the 18th century —and they also frequently did so by brilliant polemics—in other words if they can impose a more vivid comprehensible vocabulary, that alone would be a welcome outcome. Anyone who has looked at the numerous orthodox Marxist paperbacks distributed in vast quantities by reputable German publishers is struck by the frightening self-assurance of their language, by the formalised dismissal of anything "disturbing", presupposing a dogmatic atmosphere of mutual reinforcement, pre-empting the more individual processes of criticism and insight. Any reader who has no stomach for such theological unanimity, in which so much is taken as self-evident and so much else as unarguable, will anticipate the arrival of the "new philosophers" with pleasure. They will be criticised, evaluated, even refuted; their lack of system, their often mindless romanticism and their many quick-triggered conclusions will be pointed out; but it will not be done in that "Language of Tyranny", analysis of which is one of the "new philosophers'" achievements. The fact that much of Marxist writing, which thinks of itself as radical, has become at once a thing of conservative psychic comfort and also a means of intimidating and of inhibiting thought is now recognised both by the independent thinkers of the young intellectuals and by their mentors who are now faced with more awkward questions. Even if the "new philosophers" have done nothing else—and perhaps in fact they *have* done nothing else—this is reason enough to welcome them.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW FROM PROMETHEUS

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE STATE

edited by Sidney Hook, Paul Kurtz, and Miro Todorovich

Contributors to this volume discuss the role of the government in higher education. Essays by Sidney Hook, William McGill, Robert H. Bork, Alan Bloom, and other educators, administrators, and philosophers.

"A provocative book...recommended."

- *Library Journal*

ISBN 0-87975-098-7 ..... Cloth $15.95

PHILOSOPHY AND PARAPSYCHOLOGY

edited by Jan Ludwig

A collection of thirty papers on philosophical aspects of parapsychology. Includes articles by J.B. Rhine, Gardner Murphy, C.D. Broad, C.J. Ducasse, Antony Flew, S.G. Soal, and others.

ISBN 0-87975-075-8 ..... Cloth $16.95
ISBN 0-87975-076-6 ..... Paper $8.95

MARXIST HUMANISM AND PRAXIS

edited by Gerson S. Sher

A penetrating indictment of Marxism in Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe. Essays by Gajo Petrovic, Mihailo Markovic, Svetozar Stojanovic, and other dissident Yugoslav philosophers.

ISBN 0-87975-097-7 ..... Cloth $14.95

INFANTICIDE AND THE VALUE OF LIFE

edited by Marvin Kohl

A thorough examination of an issue of contemporary moral concern. The arguments for and against the controversial practice of infanticide are featured in this anthology of original papers. Articles by Joseph Fletcher, Brandt F. Steele, John Donnelly, Leonard Weber, and others.

ISBN 0-87975-100-2 ..... Cloth $15.95

Prometheus Books

1203 Kensington Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14215

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Dog Engulfed by Sand (I)

Abstraction & Irony—By MALCOLM BRADBURY

ONE OBLIQUE WAY into thinking about what is happening in the contemporary English novel, which is not distinct from the novel as it is evolving in other countries, is to think about the relationship between fiction and painting, especially with regard to the treatment of the human figure and the growth of abstraction—lines of development which have tended to be common ground in the modern evolution both of art and the more serious kind of novel.

There are many ways of reflecting on the matter, but one of them is to look at the question from the standpoint of the practising novelist, which, besides being a critic, I am. And like many writers now, I find myself much concerned with the question of how to create and pose a human figure in a world that can no longer be regarded as comfortably "realistic."[1] Painters, and film-makers, and television writers and directors have that problem: the serious modern camera or canvas frequently insists on it. But writers have it too, within the particular limits, resources and options of their own medium. I would like to give some thought to it, because it seems to me one of those "essentialist" questions that generate stylistic development and change, because, in short, my own preoccupation seems a good deal more than a personal one.

But let me start with the familiar, the repeated, and the common sense reservation: writing and painting are really not the same sorts of activity at all. Painters paint, with paint, or draw, or sketch, or nowadays do many other things, with buckets, and bricks, and bicycle-pumps, but they work in an eminently visual medium, their main instruments of expression and analysis being colour and form. They make what we may call, in the most kindly sense, unspeakable objects. Their artefacts can normally be taken in as a unity (and anyone who has ever seen a reviewer with a Martini at an opening will know how quickly this immediate, instantaneous response can be formed); their codes can be very considerably self-made. What they do is not inherently referential, though they may seek to make it so, may have to make it so.

Writers are not in that situation. Writers write, and their material, their instrument of expression and analysis, is words; words are universal currency. They are serial, have structural logics or grammars, are referential, communal, and extremely difficult to privatise, though writers may seek to make them so, may have to make them so. Because language is serial, writing works in sequences, more like a film than a painting; and it is assimilated in sequences (hence critics reading novels need an awful lot of Martinis, and in my experience seem frequently to have had them).

There is a classic analogy between poetry and painting—*ut pictura poesis*—but, as Lessing insisted, distinguishing between the spatial and the temporal arts, it is false. It becomes proportionately *more* false when the objects in the comparison are a painting and a novel. For if

[1] An obvious case in point is, of course, Samuel Beckett, especially in more recent pieces like "Ping." But of course Beckett has increasingly used the framed arch of the theatre, and its axes of light and darkness, posed room and posed agent, to explore the issues. There are other novelists much obsessed with the question of the relation of agent to landscape, from Nicholas Mosley to J. G. Ballard, though perhaps none in England with the extraordinary precision of Peter Handke in Germany. But there are many signs of the preoccupation; one might quote Emma Tennant in an interview, reflecting on the need for a contemporary unrealism and commenting on the influence of South American and Eastern European writers on her fiction:

> "They describe states of political instability, economic recession and general powerlessness in a way which seemed to me a more interesting way of looking at contemporary reality than the old English naturalistic pudding."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

poems are hard to spatialise, and short stories too, they can embody the aspiration. The modern short story, the story of Joyce or Katherine Mansfield or Beckett or Gertrude Stein, can in several fashions manifest the pictorial analogy in a way that novels cannot, as Gertrude Stein concluded when she tried to write her "cubist" novel, *The Making of Americans*. The novel is grammatical, narratological extension and seriality at its largest; fiction, committed to prose and length, using the instrument of public discourse on the scale of massive exposition, has to function through linear codes. It thus works close to familiar habits of extended narration and modes of expository report.

The underlying difference is sometimes pinned down in a simple assumption: paintings have style and form, novels have subjects and stories, or plots. Paintings are thus a window on the world where one examines the window, novels a window where one examines the world. The distinction is not totally true, but it has a truth, one that novelists have often been anguished by. And so it is not surprising that, when novelists wish to emphasise the seriousness of their art, or emphasise technique over subject, or to urge that they have created a complex object, they turn, with a certain envy, toward the painterly analogy. But it is in fact an analogy that has depth and resource, and that is my present theme.

I AM INTERESTED IN the novel today, but the novel has a history, which new novels amend; and it is profitable to go back to it for a while. The novel in England effectively emerged as a public form in the 18th century, from a point of intersection where an old romance tradition encountered, with great profit, a new disposition, rooted in an expanding, more scientifically disposed culture, toward empiricism, individualism, and realism. The new form appeared, as if by paradox, in a season where the prevailing aesthetic regimen was conservative and neoclassical. To explain the new form one needed old codes. And so innovative novelists with strong formal preoccupations—often slightly ironic ones, for comedy became a principle behind the new act of generic innovation—novelists like Henry Fielding and Laurence Sterne, thus had two obvious analogies to which they might turn for aesthetic comparison, theoretical enquiry, and self-definition.

One was the dramatic analogy, which led back to Aristotle; the other the painterly. A classic place where they meet is in Henry Fielding's "Preface" to *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews* (1742); here Fielding defines the emergent novel as an Aristotelian hybrid—the comic epic poem in prose—but then adds a discussion of an essentially painterly problem, that of distinguishing between character and caricature in comic portraiture. An obvious point of reference was Hogarth; and, to validate the analogy, Hogarth drew several cartoons illustrating the problem, alluding to Fielding's discussion. But Fielding was only one of a number of novelists to employ this analogue.

> "I will not so much as take pains to bestow the strip of a gauze wrapper on it [Truth], but paint situations as they actually arose to me in nature, careless of violating those laws of decency that were never made for such unreserved intimacies as ours . . ."

notes the writer-painter who narrates one 18th-century novel much concerned with the analogy. Her name is Fanny Hill, otherwise John Cleland, and among her other troubles and interests she has the persistent problem of turning prose into kinetic picture: how, she asks, do you depict in the flat medium of prose "the most interesting moving picture in all nature", which turns out to be the erect male organ?

Cleland's problem was perhaps rather a specific one; but he shared with other 18th-century practitioners of the comic epic poem in prose the difficulties of reconciling the gap between linguistic and pictorial representation in the era of severe theories of imitation and universality. Lessing, of course, was to issue the appropriate warnings about falsely comparing a medium of space with a medium of time; still, *ut pictura poesis* provided a humanistic theory which suggested that, just as art could tell heroic story, so could writing find, through its use of topography, figures, pictoral kinesis, an approach to the aesthetic universal that linked the arts. But as, towards the end of the century, romantic lore began to dominate, subjectivity of vision was emphasised, the painter and the poet became folk-heroes and prime carriers of the romantic imagination, the terms of the analogy changed—as they were to with each aesthetic season. With Romanticism, the psychic energies of the imagination and the heroic rhythms of history took on, in novels and paintings alike, a central importance; the basis of similarity therefore had to be renegotiated, and the new kind of writer had to become a new kind of painter.

When the American short-story writer Washington Irving decided he would invest his all in romanticism, and come to Europe to do so, he took on, then, a guise. He was going to be "Geoffrey Crayon, Gent."; his reports would be his "Sketch-Book"; his quest was for the Euro-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Harvester

Major New Books

Andrei Bely:
Petersburg, A Novel
"The most important, most influential, and most perfectly realised Russian novel written in the 20th Century." SIMON KARLINSKY, *New York Times Book Review, October,* £7.50.

Frederick Busch:
The Mutual Friend
Charles Dickens himself is the hero in this rich, brilliantly-imagined novel which goes beyond the mere impersonation of Dickens to a profound and provocative vision of the man and his age. *October,* £4.95.

Lewis Carroll:
Symbolic Logic, Parts I and II
Assembled from notes and galley proofs; a milestone in the history of logic. Part II, on Advanced Logic, never previously published. *October,* £10.50 (cloth) £5.50 (paperback).

Jean Chesneaux:
The People's Republic of China, 1949-1976
This volume in major new history of modern China since 1840. *December,* £12.50 (cloth) £5.50 (paperback).

Noam Chomsky:
Language and Responsibility
Informal and informative introduction to Chomsky's political and philosophical concerns over a period of many years. *October,* £8.50 (cloth) £3.50 (paperback).

David Foulkes:
A Grammar of Dreams
Major reformation of Freud's model, presenting a fundamental reorientation of dream study. *September,* £12.50.

Nelson Goodman:
Ways of Worldmaking
Discusses the role of symbols in the construction of a multiplicity of cultural worlds. *September,* £6.50.

Barbara Goodwin:
Social Science and Utopia: Nineteenth-Century Models of Social Harmony
Major re-examination of the key utopian accounts of human nature, social control, values and methodology by Godwin, Owen, Fourier and Saint-Simon. *Ready,* £11.50.

Giles Gordon:
The Illusionist and Other Fictions
A further collection of short stories from this widely-acclaimed writer. *October,* £4.95.

John E. Hankins:
Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Thought
"The most thorough account of the background to Shakespeare's thought that has ever come my way." MAYNARD MACK, *Yale University. November,* £10.50.

Roman Jakobson:
Six Lectures on Sound and Meaning
With clarity and vigour Jakobson charts the domain of phonetic studies. *September,* £6.50.

Jerome Kagan:
The Growth of the Child: Reflections on Human Development
Explores two basic attitudes to the development of the child and the personal and social consequences that flow from them. *November,* £10.50.

John Lucas (ed.):
The 1930's Challenge to Orthodoxy
Critical essays interpreting the period and its literature in a radically novel way. Illustrated. *November,* £9.50.

John Vincent:
Disraeli, Derby and the Conservative Party: The Political Journals of Lord Stanley, 1849-1869
"Essential reading for everyone interested in Victorian politics and society." LORD BLAKE. *September,* £18.50.

Barbara and Gideon Seaman:
Women and the Crisis in Sex Hormones
A milestone in investigative medical health reporting. *September,* £10.50.

Roger Taylor:
Art, An Enemy of the People
Provocative new work, rejecting the role of art as the highest manifestation of society's achievements, and exposing its functions as that of class domination. *September,* £7.50 (cloth) £3.50 (paperback).

HARVESTER PRESS • 2 Stanford Terrace • Hassocks • Sussex

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pean picturesque. *The Sketch Book*—which built up a picturesque itinerary of Europe, a romantic grand tour of sensations and impressions—was dedicated to the American painter C. R. Leslie, and in London Irving consorted with a group of American painters there training under West and Copley. They were painters on the romantic turn, obsessed with landscape and history. Irving established in prose what many American painters would in paint—that Europe was the accredited place of the imagination, the place of the painters writers now wanted to be, men venturing into imaginative fullness and the dark, risky voyages of art. It was a notion that was to run through much American fiction: Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*, James's *Roderick Hudson*, more recently Bernard Malamud's *Pictures of Fidelman*. But this was a more than American myth—a myth, indeed, that preoccupies many a figure in European fiction, from George Eliot's Ladislaw to Thomas Mann's Aschenbach: only in a romantic painterliness, an aesthetic immersion, can the full nature of art and the artist be known.

For serious novelists, in fact, the romantic revolution intensified the importance of the painterly analogy. It spoke for the timeless act of the imagination; but—as the very narrative fullness of novels tended to insist—the act was in history. No matter: painters could paint history too. And in the romantic historical novel of Walter Scott or James Fenimore Cooper one has the consequences of that recognition: the tendency is to create in a sequence of poses—situations are held, figures postured in a landscape, the text reports a scene seen as if it were already a painting. Of course these fictional "paintings" made an historical sequence; indeed they emerged from a theory of history. But then painters could follow that path too—thus Thomas Cole's famous five-painting sequence "The Course of Empire", which is as good a visual illustration of Cooper's cyclical historiography as you can find. Narrative was, of course, a great preoccupation of 19th-century writers of fiction; and the preoccupation gave the novel an abundance and a social openness of a new kind. But painters, preoccupied by notions of history and, increasingly, theories of realism, went the same way; as for writers, they regularly sustained the visual analogy and depended greatly on it. Many of our anxieties about Charles Dickens's complex visual and symbolist imagination and his power of fantasy might indeed disappear if we recall that he began as a verbal illustrator—"Boz"—working alongside a visual one.

IT IS AS THE STYLISTIC season evolved further, and the lore of realism begins to dominate, that painting and fiction appear most to diverge. For, under realism, the novel seemed—by virtue of its humanistic compassion, its looseness and openness, its capacity to accumulate detail and engage us sympathetically and compassionately with characters, its freedom to work to the length of a life—to pass beyond formalism, and to become a mode of truth itself. Yet it is sometimes forgotten, especially in modern debates, where realism is often posed antithetically against "experiment" or "form", that realism was an aesthetic and experimental movement both in painting and writing: indeed, is the experimentalism of the middle 19th century. It had long existed, but, in the wake of the 1848 revolution in Paris, it was formalised: in painting the exemplary figures were Degas and the now over-rated Courbet, in fiction Flaubert and the brothers Goncourt. And, time and again, the validation for fictional realism—whether of Dickens's kind, with its satirical, fantastic, Frith-like abundance, or George Eliot's, with its well-lit humanist intensity—was taken from movements and modes in painting. When George Eliot sought to justify her mode of social and moral realism, she, too, readily used the pictorial analogy, despite her doubts about the aesthetic sensibility, so evident in *Middlemarch*. She explained that what she was painting was not large historical canvasses, nor fantastic works of imagination, but in the manner of Dutch genre paintings, which were, she said in *Adam Bede*,

> "faithful pictures of a monotonous homely existence, which has been the fate of so many more among my fellow-mortals than a life of pomp or absolute indigence, of tragic suffering or of world-stirring actions."

The realist compound was a central moment in the history of the novel, and remains an essential case for our understanding of fiction's possibilities and resources. But, as the Victorian world picture began to disintegrate, the bleaker lore arising from Darwin began to put the landscape into perspective and shrink the image of the human figure, the realm of beneficent nature and coherent society began to be replaced by less sympathetic pictures of process and indifference, methods changed. It was possible to extend the realist principle by insisting that the study of reality was an experimental science; this led forward to naturalism. Alternatively, as social perception divided, accounts of human consciousness altered, and the very substantiality and significance of the exterior material world came into question, a new art, concerned with the study of perception, states of mind, consciousness, moved to the centre; this led forward to impressionism.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bernice Rubens
A Five Year Sentence

'one of the most imaginative and original novelists still writing in the English language' – Auberon Waugh Evening Standard.
A portrait of the sheer violence of loneliness, Bernice Rubens' new novel is a work of rare intelligence – imaginative, frequently bizarre and often deeply moving. She probes with great power and assurance the seeds of that violence to produce a book that is both gripping yet disturbing in its wider significance.
£4.25.

André Brink
Rumours of Rain

Set on the eve of the Soweto riots, André Brink follows *An Instant in the Wind*, the novel which won him a Booker Prize nomination in 1976, with another brave and compelling story drawn from the turbulent background of his South African homeland, and exposes with ruthless candour the social and political problems of the country.
'an admirably honest and courageous novel about the choices open to Afrikaners in South Africa today' – Hermione Lee Observer. £5.95.

Alan Sillitoe
Three Plays

In this first volume of plays, Alan Sillitoe, major novelist, poet and essayist, now reveals his talent as a dramatist, and in a fascinating Preface pinpoints the difference between the novelist's and the playwright's art.
The Slot Machine, a three-act play, takes as its theme the ownership of land and was originally produced at the Roundhouse under the title *The Foreign Field.*
The Interview is a one-act play about the plight of a woman in Russia who wants to emigrate to Israel.
And the third play, *Pit Strike*, is based on a short story about a miner from Nottingham, who goes south to help picket a Thames Valley power station. It was first performed on BBC Television to great critical acclaim and confirmed Alan Sillitoe's reputation as one of the most exciting dramatists writing today.
£4.95.

WH Allen

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We can see these dissolving landscapes, the outward world of technology or the city yielding to impression, in the late paintings of Turner, the nocturnes of Whistler; the subject becomes veiled by insistence on the moment of perception, the motion of light, the position of the perceiver. In painting, the aesthetic emphasis brought, of course, a new and intense painterliness. In the novel, it brought a new insistence on the pictorial analogy. Now novels took on painterly-aesthetic titles: *The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Painters became fictional heroes; aesthetes became bearers of truly modern consciousness; the artistic epiphany was much sought for amid the contingencies of prose.

THIS IS THE SEQUENCE most clearly concentrated in the career of Henry James, moving from realism to impressionism and a final position on the edge of modernism. For James, the painterly analogy was crucial and insistent. Not only are most of his surrogates for the writer or the man seeking to form a true perception painters, sculptors, or people who think like them; the analogy allowed him to concentrate and order two of his essential artistic anxieties. One was the problem of the deliverance of form, the means by which the process of creative germination generated not simply story but form itself. The other concern was with the ambiguous nature of perception, with subject-object relations, with the way man, seeming to see reality, in fact invents it.

James's earlier, more realist work is greatly interested in the theme of how we shape the solid world about us, negotiate with its materiality and acquire a sense of the real and the significant. His later owes much of its complexity to the problem of finding a grammar accurate to the act of perception. In it, material world and seeing eye diverge; the problem is to get subject and object, seer and seen, into apt perceptual position. *The Ambassadors* (1903) is thus a novel about a man who learns to see: Strether, by perceptual necessity, becomes an impressionist, and the crucial scene by the river, the meaning of which he at first fails to fathom, is a painting he has yet to see and read properly. As for James, he, too, becomes an impressionist, with strong symbolist leanings: an increasingly *abstract* writer, caught in the complex synaesthetic problems of the end of the 19th century, when world-view was so deeply changing. At the turn of the century James, in a famous statement, proposed that the novel, freed of onerous moral controls, was becoming more itself. If so, it was doing so by moving in the direction of a new abstraction, and with benefit of the painterly analogy.

I HAVE BEEN SUGGESTING that there are significant ways in which writers and painters are kin, and know it; and that one of the most significant is that they share a parallel evolution of style. It has, in fact, usually been at moments of sharp stylistic change—change that, of course, comes from a deep-rooted perceptual change throughout society—that the analogy has been most important.[2] But it is with the next stages in this sequence of change that I am really concerned. So let us now look, with rather more detail, at what comes next: that profound and crucial shift in artistic sensibility and in underlying assumptions, in society, about the nature of man and experience which occurred at the beginning of this century, and which we call, for convenience, "modernism."

Let me start with two people crossing the Atlantic, moving from America to Europe on the already historical quest from reality to art. The two are Gertrude and Leo Stein, coming from Baltimore to Paris in 1903 with, particularly in Gertrude's case, a high sense of destiny: "I meant to be historical, from almost a baby on", she said. Gertrude thought first of settling in London, but rejected it on inspection: "Gertrude Stein was not very much amused", she explained. For the Steins wanted an artistic milieu, and, as the lore of the period emphasised, as readers of *Trilby* well knew, bohemia was Paris and the Left Bank.

The Steins, who eventually settled at 27 rue de Fleurus, had two activities in mind. One was art-collecting, a family custom, especially pursued by Leo, an art historian and a friend of Bernard Berenson. The other, Gertrude's speciality, was prose-writing. The Steins were not entirely well-trained in contemporary art, but they had good instincts, and could take advice. They first became involved with the Post-Impressionists, notably Cezanne, then with the Fauvists and the movement toward Cubism; they became personally close to Matisse and Picasso. In 1905,

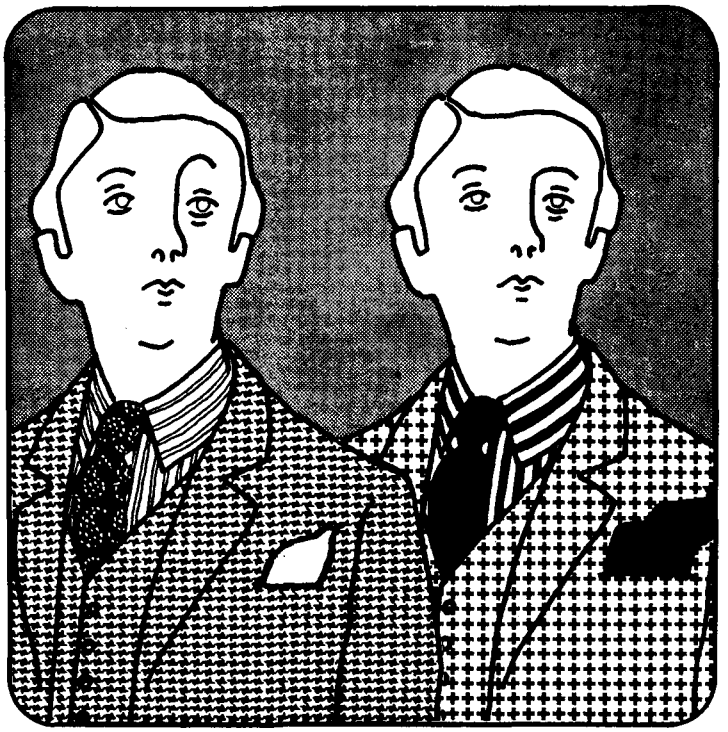
[2] Many art historians have, of course, considered stylistic parallelism. But for a systematic argument on behalf of the "analogical comparison" of style in writing and painting, see the opening chapter of Wylie Sypher, *Four Stages of Renaissance Style* (New York, 1956). Sypher deals with the period relevant to my theme in three later books, to which I am indebted: *Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature* (New York, 1960), *Loss of the Self in Modern Art and Literature* (New York, 1962), and *Literature and Technology: The Alien Vision* (New York, 1968).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DEBRETT

U & NON-U REVISITED

EDITED BY RICHARD BUCKLE



In 1956 a little book edited by the late Nancy Mitford, called Noblesse Oblige, hit the world like a bombshell. Professor Alan S. C. Ross, who started the controversy, and who coined the expressions U and non-U (upper class and not upper class), in this present book has brought his list up to date. The contributors to this book are Sir Cecil Beaton, H. B. Brooks-Baker, Richard Buckle, Earl of Harewood, Philip Howard, Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that Ilk, Bart., Patrick Montague-Smith (Editor, Debrett's Peerage), Lady Mosley (Diana Mitford), Alan S. C. Ross, and Christopher Sykes.

PUBLISHED BY DEBRETT'S PEERAGE LIMITED. PRICE £3.75 (plus 25p post/packing)

Available from
Debrett's Peerage Ltd., 23 Mossop Street, London SW3. Telephone 01-581 0174
or all good bookshops

Write for a free booklist of all Debrett titles.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Leo and Gertrude bought Cezanne's portrait of his wife; the following spring, Gertrude began sitting for her portrait by Picasso. Soon after, she saw in his studio "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon", the painting usually taken as the turning point into cubism. And it was around this time that Gertrude, having laid aside the early novel about a Lesbian relationship posthumously published as *Things As They Are*, began—under the Cezanne portrait, which, she said, gave her "a new feeling about composition"—a translation of Flaubert's late *Trois Contes*, which gradually amended itself into *Three Lives*.

Three Lives was, she later said, the "first definite step away from the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century in literature." She came to see it as a form of verbal post-impressionism, and especially important was Cezanne's growing abstraction—his way both of creating and decreating a portrait so that it conveyed both the inner energy of the sitter and the outward energy of the act of creation, so spatialising form, and foregrounding the aesthetic content. It was this abstraction, this move away from the causal and the literal, this emphasis given to form itself, that drew her. "Nothing changes from generation to generation except the thing seen and that makes a composition", she said, adding: "The composition in which we live makes the art we see or hear."

The impact of "new composition" is most evident in the middle story, "Melanctha", about a black servant girl in Baltimore. This is visibly set in the modern force-field, is post-causal and present tense; she called her method that of the "synchronic present." But if painting was influencing her, she apparently was influencing painting; if you want to know how cubism started then, she said, it was because of Picasso's "long struggle with the portrait of Gertrude Stein." The influence was mutual; now she began applying cubism to fiction. So came *The Making of Americans*, her one full novel, a massive text of some 1,000 pages, based on the proposition that Americans themselves were cubists, products of the new composition, inhabitants of the new space-time continuum.

The Making of Americans is one of those novels that it is better to have read than to read. What the new space-time continuum required was an abstract novel, depending on the defeat of the realistic noun, the elimination of remembering as a source of causality, the process of abstraction by collectivity (the history of one American being the history of all) and the principle of composition by paragraph. "I was sure that in a kind of way the enigma of the universe could in this way be solved", explained Gertrude Stein. The result is a work of enigmatic boredom, an attempt at what Joseph Frank would call "spatial form",[3] but a work that in many ways bears out her claim that it is the first 20th-century novel. It is also a kind of anti-novel, a reaction against narrrative, hungering for the synchronicity of a painting. Indeed Gertrude Stein now abandoned long narrative altogether, going for the short prose pieces—portraits, collages, abstracts—that appeared in *Tender Buttons* (1914), which depend very exactly on the painterly analogy; to read them, we have to think of them as paintings, prose equivalents to the pictures at the famous Armory Show of 1913, which not only established experimental abstraction in America, but also the reputation of Gertrude Stein.

Gertrude Stein's achievement is in some ways essentially a pre-war achievement, though *The Making of Americans* did not appear until the 1920s; in this respect, it is a similar case to *Ulysses* or *A la recherche du temps perdu*, those other classics of spatial form and verbal revolution. It comes out of the pre-war synaesthesia, when the arts drew marvellously together in the new movements and magazines, in the bohemian enclaves and the small presses, and when writing, painting, music, sculpture, dance seemed to be aspiring toward a common, and a new, aesthetic identity.

So Gertrude Stein's kind of novel became, in fact, a prototypical version of modernism, and from it we can see a considerable inheritance, leading us forward to Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Faulkner, and the other witnesses the first half of the 20th century offered to the defeat of conventional seriality and to the revolution of the word. It was part of a large-scale change in the species, as Alan Friedman suggests in his appropriately titled *The Turn of the Novel*;[4] novels were becoming complex perceptual objects rather than material reports. By 1910, Arnold Bennett, reviewing the Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries, was reflecting that if he were a younger novelist he would need to begin again; Virginia Woolf, no doubt with the same exhibition in mind, identified 1910 as the year in which human character changed, and with it the whole need and necessity of the modern arts.

But of the change there is no better image than

[3] Joseph Frank's famous argument is found in "Spatial Form in Modern Literature", reprinted in his book *The Widening Gyre* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1963).

[4] Alan J. Friedman, *The Turn of the Novel* (New York and London, 1966).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that of Gertrude Stein in her atelier, under her Cezanne and Picasso. For she was, in her basic instincts, right: the path of the arts was toward abstraction, which posed a problem for those who worked with words. Yet they would have to follow, and many did, in a revolt against the novel's liberal causality, its tendency to follow the logic of a life, the rhythm of a plot, the sequence of the clock and history. So there was a turn to consciousness and aesthetics, to composition and painting-like sequences. The completion of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* is in more than one sense the completion of a painting; Lily Briscoe finishes her canvas, and Virginia Woolf her own, a triptych, three canvasses set in time, but out of history, timeless as an aesthetic object should be.

Yet in this evolution there was a paradox. For most of these writers—like Stein and Woolf—abstraction meant an increased power of penetration, of comprehension of the human being, seen now not as a social agent or a liberal actor but as a reservoir of consciousness. Other writers, though, were decentralising the human figure for different purposes. In Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, there is no character that draws sympathy, with the possible exception of Stevie, who is, however, an idiot; the other characters are strange, cloaked forces wandering in a hostile landscape. In Wyndham Lewis's *Tarr*, the characters are automata, human machines seen from outside through Lewis's method of "the Great Without." Tarr's mind is full of "sinister piston-rods, organ-like shapes, heavy drills"; he is a figure in a Vorticist painting, a comic machine-man. Lewis rejects "fiction from the inside", the interiorised novel of Stein, Woolf or Joyce, on the grounds that it romanticises and falsifies consciousness, and his deliberate displacement of the human figure is a statement about the modern condition in a world where the landscape is an assailant, man a factor in the environment, not the controlling agent in a sympathetic world.

The paradox of modern abstraction is the paradox in our modern definitions of man, simultaneously liberal and deterministic, heroic and dismissive. It is an art of our uncertainty about the worth of man in the modern world.

Brickbats & Mortar

Arguing about Architecture—By ROGER SCRUTON

DAVID WATKIN'S *Morality and Architecture*,[1] published last year and now reprinting, has derived a certain *succès de scandale*, not from its underlying conceptions (familiar already in the work of Sir Karl Popper, Geoffrey Scott, and Sir Herbert Butterfield) but from its striking historical perspective. With rare insight and directness, Watkin describes the single spiritual force which leads from the moralism of Pugin and Viollet-le-Duc, through the hysteria of Giedion, Taut and Le Corbusier, to the recent crusade against every style of architecture that rejects the forms of the Modern Movement, and hence "the spirit of the age", the *Zeitgeist*, which is supposed to have required them.

The book is short, sharp and to the point, singling out, as principal object of attack, Sir Nikolaus Pevsner (whom the author also praises for the many aspects of his work that do not require the didactic commitment of *Pioneers of Modern Design*). Those of Watkin's critics who seem unable to grasp the proper nature of intellectual debate have construed the discussion on a personal level. But Watkin's victims are subject to no personal abuse, being criticised, and sometimes ridiculed, only when their writings seem ridiculous or wrong. Of course, to know that Reyner Banham and Charles Jencks have condemned the book, while Osbert Lancaster and John Betjeman have praised it, is already to have a fairly clear idea of its ideological tone. Watkin has a steady aim, and an inquisitorial style, and these will prove highly offensive to those for whom the ravings of Le Corbusier constitute a serious mode of architectural reflection, as well as to many more sensible men, for whom the stylistic changes of the 1920s and '30s seemed to be the necessary outcome of changes in the eye, mind and soul of 20th-century man.

Nevertheless, *Morality and Architecture* should not be read as an attack on the Modern Movement. The author is concerned not with modern architecture, but with the apologetic of which it has stood in need. Watkin discusses the handful of doctrines through which the Modern Movement has been able to convert itself from an aesthetic enterprise into a moral and political

[1] *Morality and Architecture*. By DAVID WATKIN. Oxford University Press, £2.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crusade. He argues that the ideology of the movement has been largely materialistic, secular, and egalitarian; it has been against style, ornament, excess, and grandeur; it has been in favour of the collectivity against personal imagination, of historical force against individual will, of the socialist millennium against privilege, patronage and class. (And all this is explicitly reaffirmed by one of Watkin's angry modernist critics—Kenneth Campbell, former housing architect to the London County Council and Greater London Council—in the *Architectural Review* for February 1978.) Nevertheless, in seeking to translate that ideology into architectural form, the Modern Movement has relied on arguments that were used as much by Pugin in his polemics on behalf of a "Christian" architecture, as by the eggheads of the Bauhaus, for whom cleanliness and not godliness had to be first in a builder's thoughts. For 150 years the same collection of fallacies has been invoked to provide each succeeding style, or lack of style, with an appropriate dressing of necessity.

Watkin writes at a considerable distance from the ideological conflicts of the '20s and '30s, and he can no more be blamed than the rest of his generation if he fails to admire the baggage of egalitarianism placed on the public market in those years. Nor can he be blamed if he rejects the attitude that has sought for progress and novelty in everything, even in art, which, because it values not novelty but originality, is necessarily among the most backward-looking of human enterprises. The tone of *Morality and Architecture* will come as no surprise to any member of the generation that has witnessed universal desecration in the name of progress, justice, and artistic truth. Why, then, should Sir John Betjeman call Watkin's tract "a brave and lonely book"? Certainly there have been reviewers whose hostility might seem to justify the remark. Reyner Banham (*Times Literary Supplement*, 17 February 1978) attributes to Watkin the kind of vindictiveness "of which only Christians seem capable" (a view which sheds surprising light on Banham's own religious views), while Richard Wollheim (*Architectural Review*, February 1978) regards the welcome given to *Morality and Architecture* as yet one more sign of the poverty of architectural theory, resolving his seemingly ambivalent and circumlocutory review on a sudden note of passionate distaste. But these reactions—while being those of an established intelligentsia—are untypical. The book has indeed been welcomed, and sometimes with an enthusiasm as intemperate as Banham's and Wollheim's abuse. It is somewhat odd, therefore, that neither side has seen fit to discuss the central argument.

WATKIN ASSERTS THAT a long tradition of fallacious reasoning has not only obscured the true nature of aesthetic judgment, but also has made possible the wholesale subjection of architectural values to the exigencies of moral or political thinking, often by practical men, for whom thinking of any kind is a mistake. (And if Watkin singles out Pevsner as his principal target, it is surely because Pevsner is a thinker, and not just a jobbing builder with an eye for the market.) Architecture, Watkin claims, is an autonomous enterprise, in which individual taste and cultural tradition are the major legitimate guides; the attempt to reduce architecture to a by-product of social need, or of historical force, or of the *Zeitgeist*; the attempt to see it only as a moral or political instrument—all these are ways of denying to architecture its essential nature as a decorative art.

As a diagnosis of a curious episode in intellectual history, *Morality and Architecture* is persuasive and highly entertaining. But some of its admirers, grateful for a book that pours scorn on the gibberish of modernism, have sought for more in Watkin's pages than the historical vision which they contain. Thus Paul Johnson, writing in *The Daily Telegraph* (17 December 1977), declares that "all sensible and sensitive people know that modern architecture is bad and horrible, almost without exception. Mr Watkin explains why." But how can fallacies in the theory of modern architecture explain the disaster of its practice, when the same fallacies were invoked in support of the highly successful styles of the Gothic revival? Watkin's opponents have also taken him to be writing, not of the history of architectural dogma, but rather of the relation between theory and practice. Much of Wollheim's antipathy rests on the assumption that Watkin is out of sympathy with the stylistic changes of the '20s, and that he has no sense—as Wollheim puts it—of the "tiredness" of styles. But surely the first of these accusations is entirely irrelevant, even for someone who can muster the kind of sympathy for the "international style" that Wollheim intimates.

THE SECOND OF Wollheim's accusations is, however, more interesting, in that it betrays a lingering attachment to one of the theories that Watkin attacks, the theory that an architect is compelled to be "of his time" in some way beyond the mere fact of living in it. Styles suddenly become "tired", and hence unavailable to the architect who wishes to maintain his status as a modern man. The trouble with such a view is not that it is false, but rather, as Watkin points out, that there is no way in which an artist can be

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seriously influenced by it. Suppose the Gothic style really was "tired" when Pugin, Butterfield and their predecessors revived it. Should that have deterred them? And should it deter the builders at Bury St Edmunds and Lancing College? Moreover, how can we say that the classical tradition was "tired" when the Modern Movement set out to destroy it? It is certainly not exhaustion that we witness in the exuberant classicism of the Edwardians, in the proud city palaces of Fleet Street and Piccadilly. We may see bad taste here, but we can see no exhaustion comparable to the dismal emptiness of the *cité radieuse* and all that it engendered. Something is wrong if we see only "tiredness" in the Edwardian style, and "freshness and youth" in the sterile forms that were engineered to replace it.

But to the point: sensible and sensitive men no more say that *all* modern architecture is horrible than that all preceding architecture was good. The trouble is that in architecture the rewards are vast and multifarious, and the desire to obtain will always exceed the power to justify. The enthusiasm that surrounded the death of style in architecture made it inevitable that there should be no serious consideration given to the arguments of those who had signed its death warrant. As Watkin's polemic shows, the question of the nature of architecture is rich and complex; at the same time, every unscrupulous intellectual trick has been used to simplify it, so as to represent the "international" style as historically, socially, politically, morally and technologically necessary.

It becomes apparent that for 150 years stylistic changes have sought to justify themselves, and to justify themselves in identical, or closely related, terms. Besides establishing this important historical conclusion, Watkin also hints at his own aesthetic position, a position which involves a defence of the autonomy of aesthetic values. In a brief and unfriendly review (*RIBA Journal*, February 1978), Lord Esher pointed out that the case for the autonomy of architecture had been effectively put by Geoffrey Scott (in *The Architecture of Humanism*, a finely written book that deserved to have more influence on the thought of the '20s than the *Zeitgeist* would permit). However, this similarity with Scott ought not to be regarded as a defect; the doctrine of the autonomy of aesthetic values is essentially rhetorical, a question of emphasis. It must be put afresh for every generation in the language most suited to the time. Modern students of architecture will be grateful for a renewed statement of the position, a statement that chooses as its principal target, not the romanticism of the late Gothic Revival, but the more deadly spirit of comprehensive development,

CHICAGO

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

126 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD
LONDON SW1

SOVIET AND AMERICAN SOCIETY
A Comparison
Paul Hollander

Soviet and American Society contrasts and examines the major contemporary social institutions and problems within the world's two most powerful nations with special reference to their most enduring features. Focusing on three areas—political institutions and practices, social values and beliefs, and social problems—Hollander carefully explores such topics as advertising and propaganda, equality of opportunity, education, the decline and revival of religion, family life, sexual morality, problems of authority, and crime. £5.60 paper

SABERS AND BROWN SHIRTS
The German Students' Path to National Socialism, 1918–1935
Michael Stephen Steinberg

In Sabers and Brown Shirts, Steinberg examines student movements of the Weimar Republic and concludes that their significant support for the creation of a National Socialist society was affected less by ideas and ideology than by the social climate in Germany between 1918 and 1932. £12.25

CITIZENS AND POLITICS
Mass Political Behavior in India
Samuel J Eldersveld and Bashiruddin Ahmed

In this remarkable book the authors assess the character of Indian political development and the extent to which the Indian public has participated in the democratic system. Their unprecedented national surveys of the 1967 and 1971 national elections provide abundant data that may be used to compare Indian democracy with its Western counterparts and with other developing nations. £18.20

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

urban renewal, the technological revolution, and, as its crowning aesthetic embodiment, the Festival of Britain.

But their gratitude will also go to show that the arguments are not all on the side of Scott and Watkin. If you hate those things, then it *is* partly because of their moral and political meaning; the ugliness of the Smithsons' project at the Elephant and Castle is not separable from the contemptuous conception of life's value that it conveys. It is important, therefore, to try to see behind the high-toned irony with which Watkin presents his opponents' dogmas, to the real intellectual issues upon which he too must take a stand.

SO FAR AS I CAN SEE, there are two issues, intimately connected. First, there is the issue which focuses on the term "historicism" (used one way by Popper, another by Pevsner); secondly there is the issue just mentioned, the autonomy of aesthetic values. In discussing the first of these, Watkin persuasively argues that the Hegelian view of history, which has been so important an instrument of architectural criticism, has been also applied as a rule of practice, in which sphere it is strictly nonsensical. Giedion, Pevsner, and many others have all argued that the spirit of the age, being compelled by all that preceded it and propelled towards its *Aufhebung* in the world to come, must dictate the forms of architecture, making it impossible, retrograde or dishonest to build in the manner of the past. That view relies on a discredited notion of history. It is also necessarily selective. (How, Watkin asks, do we *know* that Gropius was essential and Lutyens only accidental to the spirit of the time which fostered both of them?) Moreover, the view has the stunning consequence that all Western architecture, from the Romans to the Edwardians, could not, or should not, have happened.

Nevertheless, for all its exaggeration, the Hegelian view of history has a legitimate critical use. (It would now be difficult to discard the Hegelian distinction between Renaissance and Baroque, however much one may wish to qualify it.) Perhaps Watkin, like Popper and Gombrich, does not sufficiently appreciate this fact, or sufficiently acknowledge its intellectual implications. But for Watkin the really obnoxious feature of the view is not the possibility of its legislative (as opposed to its critical) employment, but its almost inevitable degeneration into "progressivism"—into the view that the movement of history is necessarily *forward*, from worse to better. Following Sir Herbert Butterfield, Watkin castigates this outlook as the "Whig view of history." The concept is a crude one, partly because of the crudeness of what it describes, but also because discussion of these issues requires more serious consideration of what "better" and "worse" consist in than was ever to be heard in the Smoking Room of the Reform Club (incidentally, one of London's greatest, and most thoroughly backward-looking, classical buildings). As a rhetorical instrument, Butterfield's label is effective, but blunt; Watkin's ironical tone would have benefited, perhaps, from the use of something finer. Applied to the doctrines of national and international socialism, as these became entangled with the apologetic of modern architecture, the "Whig view of history" begins to obscure as much as it clarifies. Can we really believe that the mad rationalism of the Jacobins, the evolutionism of Spencer, the dialectical materialism of Engels and Lenin are all adequately subsumed under a label invented to ridicule an English aristocratic faction? This is not to reject the truth of what Watkin means, but rather the over-schematic way in which he displays it.

More importantly, there are attitudes which no one could describe as "progressivist" and yet which cannot be characterised in terms of the parochial conceptions of Whiggery. Consider the architects of the Italian Renaissance. They worked within and towards a tradition, with their minds firmly fixed on a classical ideal. At the same time they worked in a spirit of improvement, a spirit to which Hegelians have rightly attributed a world-historical significance, compelled towards a new architecture by self-conscious spiritual change. The Renaissance architect did not articulate this change as we (with hindsight) would articulate it, and it is true, as Watkin points out, that the distinction between the Renaissance and the Mediaeval attitude to building has often been grossly exaggerated. Nevertheless, one could not characterise Brunelleschi's artistic intention if one did not recognise that his style was seen as an improvement, consonant with the social, moral and intellectual changes among which it was conceived. Clearly, criticism of such a style will require sharper distinctions than that between, on the one hand, the Whig view of history, and, on the other, the respect for tradition, custom and individual will.

AS WATKIN DEMONSTRATES, the *Zeitgeist* enthusiasts of our time, in so far as they have inspired and justified the forms of modern architecture, have usually done so out of strong political convictions. Watkin refers to these convictions dismissively and briefly, using the word "collectivist" many times, and always as though it had a clear political meaning. Since the reference to these political attitudes is not intended to preface

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

any full analysis of them (Watkin's contention being that politics is one thing, architecture another), the argument comes to rest on the second major assumption, the assumption of the autonomy of aesthetic values.

One of the many virtues of Watkin's book is that it shows how difficult it is either to affirm or to deny this assumption, particularly when considering the useful and decorative arts. How far can one separate those aesthetic values which Watkin assigns to "taste", "tradition", and "the way it looks" from the moral, political and functional considerations which animate the architect and his public? Watkin argues pithily against what Scott called "the ethical fallacy", and against every other view which seeks to explain architecture away, as a means to an end, or as a by-product of some independent force or interest. Wisely, however, he refrains from providing an aesthetic theory of his own. Scott's attempt—a messy concoction out of bygone psychology—provides the weakest chapter in his brilliant essay. But Scott's failure is a necessary result of the obscurity in the doctrine of aesthetic autonomy, a doctrine whose value will always be more rhetorical than intellectual. While Watkin is right to insist that one cannot pass from moral maxims to clear aesthetic rules, he cannot be right if he thinks that there is *no* connection between these things. How else can one explain his own (and Paul Johnson's) anger at the Modern Movement? The reader is left, then, with an intellectual puzzle, and Watkin's effective dismissal of a tradition of nonsense still does not solve the puzzle which served to generate it.

The lesson of Watkin's book deserves to be absorbed, not only by students of architecture, but by everyone interested in the *Zeitgeist* in its surprising most recent form. Here, for once, is a young man writing intelligently and perceptively about architectural theory; and the spirit which he expresses is high-toned and élitist, as contemptuous of fashion as it is respectful towards "tradition and the individual talent." If this is the *Zeitgeist*, then the established pundits of architectural theory must look forward to an early overthrow. And I doubt that many will mind.

Heads, Tongues & Spirits

New Poetry—By ALAN BROWNJOHN

IT IS CERTAINLY A TRIBUTE to the elegant assurance—and, yes, the startling inventiveness—of the poems in Craig Raine's first volume that one reads them forgetting how often a nice derangement of metaphors has been called in during the last few decades to enliven the surface of English poetry. A lot of it seems remarkably new and fresh in Raine; but it was already there, for example, in Louis MacNeice:

The foam in the curving bay is a goose-quill
That feathers . . . unfeathers . . . itself.

It reappeared as a recurring mannerism in Norman McCaig:

the wind
has moulded the sand in pastry frills
and cornices

And it provided a temptation for the early Seamus Heaney; whose "Trout"

slips like butter down
the throat of the river.

One doesn't swallow butter in the shape of fish, and fish don't melt in water—but there's no refuting Raine with such bits of Johnsonian niggling. Or very rarely: ice-cream cornets do not nibble "down to thimbles" so much as miniature cornets, and traffic lights surely only resemble "three sisters longing for Moscow" by being stationary and in threes. Otherwise, he is almost flawlessly exact and continually surprising; and he safeguards himself against pretentiousness by tying his metaphors firmly to the objects described and to the moment of perception.

The Onion, Memory[1] is about the drunkenness of things being transmutable: transmutable not into symbols (which is a comfort) but into other things which can be cajoled or laughed into seeming ridiculously like them:

He shakes the air into a paper bag and,
eggs pickpocketed inside, trapezes it.
"The Grocer"

Cups commemorate the War
of Jenkins' Ear
"An Enquiry into Two Inches of Ivory"

[1] *The Onion, Memory*. By CRAIG RAINE. Oxford University Press, £2.25.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A church bell gives out a clink
of pencils

"Gethsemane"

All the lizards are asleep—
perched pagodas with tiny triangular tiles

"Nature Study"

The brilliance of Raine's invention does serve to prevent the poems becoming mere boxes of whimsical tricks, even where one sees that he might have gone on for as long as the available detail lasted out—he seems aware of the dangers in "Professor Klaeber's Nasty Dream"; and Craig Raine in a junk shop could be a nightmare indeed. But the whole procedure also precludes much chance of normal human concerns breaking in; whereas they always did with MacNeice, and one at least respects McCaig for pushing his fancies out to wider horizons.

The Onion, Memory contains no more than three or four poems where the poet himself manages to emerge from under his own pile of coloured balloons. These include the title-poem, and "Epithalamion", arguably the best one in the book, where the lovers lying in a field—transmuted into a wedding party with "a thousand parsley parasols"—sense a destructiveness in their liaison:

We've come too soon
against a wedding-day that was not long . . .

and trying to make love
we only make adultery.
Here we have and hold our muddled hearts.
There, across the field, the excavator starts.

There is something unsatisfactory about a poetry which obliges the reader first to puzzle out, and then to test, the appositeness of a hundred local effects. This can't be the way poetry should be read, and if a telling point *is* made through bizarre clusters of metaphorical devices, it is quite possible that it could be made without them. With so much enterprise about—and so much intelligent calculation—one waits eagerly for those dim shadows in the wings to come out and show themselves as poems which are moving as well as ferociously ingenious.

THE CHRONOLOGY, and the completeness, of Ted Hughes' published works—and the exact kind of status readers are asked to accord to each book—is now rather confusing: something that seems to happen to an increasing number of major talents. *Crow* came out in 1970, and a variety of poems as yet uncollected (including a Prometheus sequence) followed it. *Cave Birds* appeared in an expensive limited edition in 1975, was staged, and broadcast. So its new "commercial" edition,[2] with the bird drawings by Leonard Baskin which appeared in the original one, has been preceded by *Season Songs* in 1976 and *Gaudete* last year. *Season Songs* was "intended primarily for young readers", but has been widely taken as an important Hughes work on any level, which it is. *Gaudete* was not for young readers, but it wasn't "poems" either: it was a self-contained novel in verse. Meanwhile, other poems (there is a growing batch about his home county of Yorkshire) have been accumulating. Yet *Cave Birds* is his first book of individual poems "for adults" to appear in eight prolific years—and even then it occupies a special category because of the fairly close relation between the poems and the Baskin illustrations. This is what they call a bibliographer's nightmare; but bibliographers *enjoy* their nightmares.

Cave Birds consists of twenty-nine poems (the group is given the sub-title "An Alchemical Cave Drama") which are really related to one another only in manner, not by any dramatic form, or easily perceptible sequence, or even by subject: they are certainly not all about birds, or bird-attributes, or even transmutations of birds, despite Baskin's huge and arresting line-drawings on the facing pages, which draw out and emphasise the avian elements in each piece. Thus, "The judge" is more spider than bird:

The pondering body of the law teeters across
A web-glistening geometry.

Lolling, he receives and transmits
Cosmic equipoise.

But Baskin's illustration offers an enormous, puffed-up pullet with claws and talons like the bottoms of tree-trunks. This lack of unity in the conception of the book makes the overall intention puzzling to decipher; so it comes down to treating it as a series of poems linked mainly by a common style.

The manner in *Cave Birds* is the one familiar from *Crow*, deriving in part from some notable European poets, the Jugoslav Vasko Popa especially. In the Introduction to the Penguin *Selected Poems* of Popa, now reprinted in the *Collected Poems*[3] published earlier this year, Hughes wrote:

"Human beings, as visibly and wholly such, rarely appear in Popa's landscapes. .Only

[2] *Cave Birds*. By TED HUGHES. Faber, £5.95.

[3] *Collected Poems*. By VASKO POPA. Translated by ANNE PENNINGTON. With an introduction by Ted Hughes. Carcanet, £3.25.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

heads, tongues, spirits, hands, flames, magically vitalized wandering objects, such as apples and moons, present themselves, animated with strange but strangely familiar destinies.)

Where *Crow* drew out the spare, mathematical fantasies of Popa into an elaborate allegory of the darkness of man's heart, *Cave Birds* returns to the disembodied heads, tongues and spirits:

And suddenly you
Have not a word to say for yourself.

Only a little knife, a small incision,
A snickety nick in the brain
And you drop off, like a polyp.

Only a crumb of fungus,
A pulp of mouldy tinder
And you flare, fluttering, black-out like a firework.

This is a slightly gentler, less defiant world: the celebration of violence ends in a scream "vomiting itself", the crow is flayed in the hall of judgment ("I shall not fight/Against whatever is allotted to me"). But the mind-wrenching Hughes imagery still goes over the top when it is not tethered to places, persons and seasons; there's a particular habit of linking abstract to concrete in a strained metaphor: "the carapace of foreclosure", "the baboon of panoply", "an iceberg of loss." Two poems stand out: "Something was happening"—about a bereavement—and "The knight", its echoes of John Crowe Ransom in "Captain Carpenter" and "Necrological" called down and remade with the tightness of structure that Hughes manages at his best:

already
Nothing remains of the warrior but his weapons

And his gaze.
Blades, shafts, unstrung bows—and the skull's beauty

Wrapped in the rags of his banner.
He is himself his banner and its rags.

While hour by hour the sun
Strengthens its revelation.

Cave Birds is an exciting, erratic, and interim performance; and the collection of all the stray Hughes poems of the 1970s is now overdue.

DILIGENT READERS of the little magazines in the early 1950s did not fail to notice the work of "Harold Pinta", as he was then: partly because it took the word-drunkenness of the post-Dylan Thomas era to new extremes, but

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

ONE YEAR

UK/Europe	£10.50
USA/Canada	$21.00 (surface) $26.00 (air-speeded)
Elsewhere	£12.00 (surface) Air rate on request

Full-time students

UK/Europe £8.40. USA/Canada $16.00 (surface), $21.00 (air). Elsewhere £9.60 (surface). Please state place and course of study.

Payment by sterling or dollar cheque, money order, or banker's order.

If you prefer not to cut the coupon below, please order by letter.

To: ENCOUNTER, 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS, England.

Please send me ENCOUNTER for one year starting with the.....issue.

I enclose.....(payment)

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

..... ZIP(USA).....

NEW PARK

ONE LONG NIGHT

Maria Joffe

The most powerful eye-witness account of Stalin's labour camps ever to come out of the Soviet Union. Maria Joffe survived 29 years in the prisons and camps of Stalin's Russia to write this book. It is her own story of the worst year of the purges — 1937. She is the widow of Adolf Joffe, who chaired the Soviet delegation at the Brest Litovsk peace talks of 1918. She shared his fight against the rise of Stalinism and was arrested in 1928 — one year after her husband committed suicide in protest against Leon Trotsky's expulsion from the Communist Party. She gives the first full account of the massacre of the Opposition in 1937 and indicts Stalin, his prison chiefs and secret police agents.

Translated by Vera Dixon. 247pp hardback.
ISBN 0 902030 93 0. £5.99
NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS LTD,
21B OLD TOWN, LONDON SW4 0JT

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

equally because there *was* a perfectly genuine vigour and exuberance about the way in which it did it, spinning out baroque fantasies with less of a skein of meaning in them than anyone else's—something of an achievement at the time. The second halves of two poems printed in *Poetry London* were accidentally interchanged; which wasn't noticeable until the editor tendered apologies for the mistake in the following number of the magazine. Then the flow of poems stopped ("Pinta?", someone said at a minor poets' gathering. "I think he became an actor.") and the short life of *The Birthday Party* at its London première in 1957 was the next we heard of a writer who seemed to have changed entirely from the misspelt namesake who wrote "Chandeliers and Shadows":

Enwrapped in this crust, this crumpled mosaic,
Camphor and rosefall stifle the years,
Yet I, lunatic from lunatic spheres,
Shall run crazy with lepers,
And bring God down the chimney,
A tardy locust,
To plunder and verminate man's pastures,
entirely.

The new *Poems and Prose, 1949–1977*[4] collects most of these earlier pieces, though I personally miss "One a story, two a death", and several later poems which point forward much more clearly to the plays—as does the prose, which is generally better. There is a wholly untypical ballad-like poem ("My only wife sat by a candle./ The winter keened at the door./ A widow brought us a long black shawl./I placed it on my true wife's shoulders.") from 1953, and a Movement throwback from 1977:

It is the test they set that will not go,
The failing of the doing so,
Ungainly legacy that they bestow.
"The Doing So"

But the main interest lies in that extraordinary work of Pinter's earliest years. Its crazy energy suggested at the time that Pinta might be going *somewhere*, if only round in ever-diminishing apocalyptic circles:

Fabulous in image I walked the Mayworlds,
Equal in favour the concubant winds,
Set by my triangle the sectant sounds,
Till crowed lips I kissed,
Supped with a blood of snapping birds,
In a doom and ring of belladonna to sleep.
"Book of Mirrors"

It stood out of the ruck, at a time when the "neutral tones" of 1950s poetry were just around the corner, by signalling that this was just about as far as you could take that kind of thing; and for its sheer oddity it deserves a small place in literary history. The Pinta of the early verse was as unrepeatable as the Pinter of the plays. It was his, and our, abounding luck that he had not been born ten years earlier, to be swept away by the full flood of the poetic fashion he hit upon in its fading days. "Fabulous-in-image" would not have written *The Caretaker* and *No Man's Land.*

D. M. THOMAS has been a hard poet to pin down, over some six volumes of original verse and translations, and a selection in Penguin Modern Poets; in *The Honeymoon Voyage*[5] I am reading as selectively as ever. There is a first section drawing on arcane myths and dream material (though "The Dream Game" is based on a real and nasty party ruse), playfully treated, which is a change—yet somehow routine and insubstantial beside "Under Carn Brea", where he comes back to earth with some family vignettes of a kind he has done movingly in the past; as with his Cornish "preacher-auctioneer":

A boyish chuckle in the grizzled stubble
He had, when you were leaving home, or
troubled,
A silence-covering way of saying "Yes",
Several times over, with a gruff rising stress,
That consoled; and is loved like the brambled
wheals,
Or the contours of snow clinging to some fields
"Stud"

Then he moves to a motley group containing two Catullus "translations" done in the notorious style of Louis and Celia Zukofsky, who strove to echo the *sound* of every word in the original Latin, with monumentally ludicrous results. Thus Thomas, with "*Cernitis, innuptae, iuvenes? consurgite contra;/nimirum Oetaeos ostendit Noctifer ignes*", arrives at

Churning it in up tight, you wean us; come
serve us it can't
sing in rhythm, O take us, extend it, we're
fir-cones ignited.

This sort of venture can now surely be called off once and for all. But then, in a last group of varied and offbeat lyrics, Thomas shows a genuine pressure of feeling which seems to call his rather diffused talents to order. In "Lorca", for example, where the poet hears "one of his songs/being sung/by a whore":

[4] *Poems and Prose, 1949–1977.* By HAROLD PINTER. Eyre Methuen, £6.

[5] *The Honeymoon Voyage.* By D. M. THOMAS. Secker & Warburg, £2.90.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neither the song
to himself
belonged
nor the girl
to her humiliation
nothing
belonged to anyone

when she stopped singing
it went on

death must be a poor thing
a poor thing

And in "The Return" his games with time and his preoccupation with tricks of memory and perception make beautiful sense in a poem about nearly seeing someone (dead, or just absent?) in her familiar chair:

heavy white half-naked breasts, her blue dressing gown. . . .
Sue!
I could have sworn you weren't here!

(opened her eyes, like a child in sleepwear warm and sleepy from the bath, she shone), began to take in her almost being there, just as I had taken her almost being gone.

COMIC UPDATINGS of old tales rarely work well, whereas serious ones get away with it too often. D. J. Enright has made it clear that his intentions in *Paradise Illustrated*[6] are at least fairly serious, but he is much too witty and clever a writer to let solemn truths about the Fall of Man drop too heavily from his typewriter. The result, in this long sequence about Adam and Eve, is an uncomfortable mixture: some of the jokes come off:

Eve chomped at the apple . . .

"I have done something original",
She told herself.
"But I mustn't be greedy".
She plucked a second for Adam.

And some of them sink to depths of homeliness plumbed more often by Jewish comedians than poets. This is a surprising misadventure from a writer who redeems himself at the end of the book with some "Other Poems" which show him in top form: mordantly satirising authoritarianism in ex-colonial places, chastising modern biographers, detecting the dangers in the deification of "opinion":

[6] *Paradise Illustrated.* By D. J. ENRIGHT. Chatto/Hogarth, £2.50.

Günter Grass
THE FLOUNDER
"A work of that elemental originality which made **The Tin Drum** a literary event" *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*
Translated from the German by Ralph Manheim. **£5.95**
Simultaneous publication of **IN THE EGG and other poems.**

Penelope Gilliatt
THE CUTTING EDGE
On the surface a simple story of two brothers, in Penelope Gilliatt's skilful hands **The Cutting Edge** – her first novel for eleven years – takes on a delightful complexity. She writes with a wit all her own, her subsidiary characters are a joy and her set-pieces are hilarious. **£3.95**

Belles Saisons
A Colette Scrapbook
Assembled with a commentary by Robert Phelps
A fascinating evocation of Colette's life through photographs, drawings, manuscripts and documents with a commentary drawn from letters, diaries and memoirs to give a full and vivid portrait of this extraordinary woman.
Illustrated **£8.75**

Secker & Warburg

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Thou shalt honour and obey thy Opinion.
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's opinion
nor his ass's . . .

And what, you may ask",
Thus spake the Lord, "is My Opinion?
For I also have a right to My Opinion . . .
My Opinion is that things will change
When the people have nothing to eat but their words."

"DISTANCE", "SILENCE" and "shadow" are recurrent elements in Andrew Motion's poetry. He seems to want to keep warily far from the people and places which move him to write it: and his Newdigate Prize Poem, about the displacement of poor villagers by Fen landlords in the early 17th century, suggests much more conflict and pathos than it actually delivers. For all that, *The Pleasure Steamers*[7] is a volume which shows him to better advantage than the small selection of poems in the Faber *Poetry Introduction 3*, and makes a quiet case for a poetry utterly without gesticulation, working for its effects with an honesty which may have gone (temporarily, one hopes) rather out of fashion. The title poem is a real achievement, ringing some subtle changes on a theme potentially too full of ritual nostalgia. And "The Legacy" takes up the idea of the objects left behind by the dead to make many other treatments seem mawkish and obvious in comparison:

my hand
will sign my furniture on
to children or friends,
before it stops still as hers,
and then is replaced again
in distant, unvisited rooms,
transcribing itself for ever
like shadows which follow it now,
uncurling themselves in silence
on printed paper and skin.

TOO MUCH *happens* in many of the poems in David Holbrook's new book; happens immediately, as the poet sees it, and reacts to it, and puts it all down complete. He recollects (vividly, sometimes movingly in a poem like "After a Funeral"): but tranquillity is not his style. *Chance of a Lifetime*[8] reads like a journal, of a full and combative life: the life of a brave, indignant and vulnerable man. A few years ago he was complaining against a reviewer that poetry tended to get put down harder than anything else. He was right; but the best things in this continually interesting and provoking book come accompanied by flights of frustration which *do* expose themselves. This is a pity, because few English poets have rejected as thoroughly as Holbrook the fashionably sidelong and understated approach to married love, home, children and work, which do occupy most of us for most of the time:

Astonishing this raucous woman in the bedroom,
Ordering me out, threatening to kill me,
Inviting me to put her under lock and key . . .
In the summer night I load my pantechnicon
And lie exhausted, sweating. Hearing a tree breeze
I decide to wait. . . .

It seems we have to take the rawness, the lack of economy, with the moments of achieved tenderness, pathos and sharp observation. When they come, they're good: in poems like "Domestic Interior" and "Aberystwyth" and, in a more sustained way, "Student Daughter Home for the Weekend":

So they will all go, like you, over the edge,
To their chilly college rooms, me driving,
The fledgling silent, mourning, yet eagerly off:
Then I go home alone, like this, childless, back in the dark,
Over the dead hares, and along the same featureless roads,
Back to the scraps and prints pasted in scrapbooks
With feelings a little like those after a funeral.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS' poetry shares with Holbrook the stamp of an unmistakable personality, but not much else. *The Watchman's Flute*[9] is the title of a poem about the Tuareg watchman who blows his pipe through the Nigerian night "to ward off tedium, and perhaps/Lurking malignant ghosts." Heath-Stubbs wards off the "twentieth-

---

[7] *The Pleasure Steamers*. By ANDREW MOTION. Carcanet, £2.

[8] *Chance of a Lifetime*. By DAVID HOLBROOK. Anvil, £2.25.

[9] *The Watchman's Flute*. By JOHN HEATH-STUBBS. Carcanet, £2.

RESEARCH CONSULTANTS
Leading academics
RESEARCH ASSISTANTS
Experienced honours graduates
TRANSLATORS
Qualified, most European languages
ARCHIVISTS
Try our range of services, sources and subjects

Research Assistance Routledge Associates
25 Woodhayes Road, London SW19
Phone 01-947 5614

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

century tediums" with erudition and artifice: most unfashionable of all! The most novel feature of his new volume, which also contains excellent examples of the poems about myth, legend and learning we have come to expect of him, is his affectionately acknowledged (and unacknowledged) debts to other poets. There is a small series of tributes to dead writers (Eliot, Vernon Watkins, Brian Higgins, Maurice Carpenter), a joyful pastiche of Charles Causley—and some startling moments of the Ewart- and Auden-esque, as in his opening jubilee poem:

Economics, the law of the household, decrees
Dame Parsimony, the hard-faced lady cook
Should have a finger in our festive pie, and yet
Let the silver trumpets of jubilee sound forth
Throughout the length and breadth of the land,
to authorize
Judicious binge and beano. . . .

This is his first book since the mock-epic *Artorius*: he is writing with ever-increasing humour and range in what he once, too self-disparagingly, labelled his "classical-romantic manner."

Images of the Instant Past

Sontag on Photography—By ROBERT MELVILLE

THE TAILPIECE of Susan Sontag's collected essays on the nature of the photographic image[1] is a brief anthology of quotations which she has captioned "Homage to W.B." Walter Benjamin is quoted twice in the anthology and there are several references to him in the essays. She is fascinated by his belief that he could have created a work of literary criticism consisting entirely of quotations, and she thinks they would not have been chosen to prove a case because his Surrealist sensibility would have lent ambivalence to his Marxist principles: like photographic images of the instant past, they could only have been an accumulation of oddities, but would have been greatly superior to the average collection of photographs. Her admiration for Benjamin is boundless; her admiration for photographers is mingled with contempt.

Her own little anthology is a surrealistic demonstration of the art of juxtaposition, a St Vitus's dance of modest, ambitious and absurd claims for photography interspersed with advertisements for cameras so simple to use that anyone can obtain instant results of high technical quality. The outcome is an effect of ironic neutrality. Her essays on the other hand are analytical, paradoxical, controversial, always clever, often profound—and the outcome is an effect of ironic neutrality.

One of her quotations from Benjamin evokes photographs by Atget:

> It has quite justly been said of Atget that he photographed [deserted Paris streets] like scenes of crime. The scene of a crime too is deserted; it is photographed for the purpose of establishing evidence . . . .

Atget's streets remind one of the deliberately commonplace photographs of Paris streets used by Breton to illustrate his Surrealist novel *Nadja;* like them, they are without positive hue, grey and neutral yet with a touch of mystery and melancholy. But there is a fictive account of an attempt to use a photograph as evidence of a crime in Antonioni's colour film *Blowup* in which the greenery and dismal light of a deserted park create the same sense of greyness as Atget's streets; also the film sequence in the park beautifully fits Sontag's description of the typical photographer as "an armed version of the solitary walker, reconnoitering, stalking . . . the voyeuristic stroller." A fashion photographer is taking an early morning walk in the park. Suddenly he sees in the distance a man dragging another figure into the bushes with a woman looking on. He takes a photograph but the scene is too far away, the figures are not identifiable. He becomes obsessive, convinced that the photograph knows more than it is telling him, and that by making larger and larger blowups he will force it to yield up what it is trying to conceal. It is a charming play on the deeply rooted belief that the camera cannot lie.

Sontag refers to a different sequence in *Blowup*. The photographer is sitting astride the thighs of a fashion model lying on the floor. He is madly clicking his camera at her face while she turns this way and that. The scene is a substitute for a paroxysmal rape. At the same time, Antonioni is poking fun at the kind of photographer who, instead of posing the model, treats her as a moving target and spends roll after roll of film in the hope of getting at least one startling but natural picture—to borrow a phrase once used by Sontag in another context, it's a "revolt against calculation", and incidentally supports one of her

[1] *On Photography*. By SUSAN SONTAG. Allen Lane, £5.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Trade in place of migration. *An employment-oriented study with special reference to the Federal Republic of Germany, Spain and Turkey.*
The authors of this study consider, with special reference to the employment of Turkish and Spanish workers in the Federal Republic of Germany, whether economic growth in both groups of countries would not have been more marked if the developed countries, instead of bringing in workers from the developing countries, had exported capital to them and thus established an economically more efficient international division of labour.
ISBN 92-2-101864-4 (hard cover) £6.90
ISBN 92-2-101865-2 (limp cover) £4.40

Poverty and landlessness in rural Asia
'Useful for policy-makers and academics alike . . . The problem of world hunger cannot be solved merely by attempting to increase production. The solution requires better distribution and more productive employment both to increase incentives to expand output and create effective demand for greater food output. The book contains an authoritative discussion of three such forces: private investment, the process of technical innovation, and demographic changes.' (*Finance and Development,* The World Bank, Washington).
ISBN 92-2-101767-2 (hard cover) £10.00
ISBN 92-2-101766-4 (limp cover) £7.80

Teachers' pay
Drawing on material relating to the public sector of education in over 70 countries, this new study examines in a world-wide context teachers' pay and the purchasing power of teachers' earnings.
ISBN 92-2-101862-8 £3.75

Older workers: work and retirement. *Report VI (1)*
Deals with issues concerning discrimination on grounds of age, income protection, training, social security, etc. Analyses measures ensuring quality of opportunity for older workers. For discussion at the 1979 International Labour Conference.
ISBN 92-2-101964-0 £4.40

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
London Branch Office
(Dept. EN)
87/91 New Bond Street
London W1Y 9LA.
Tel: 01-499 2084

quotes from W.B.: "There is an ever-growing compulsion to reproduce the object photographically, in close-up." But Sontag cites this sequence from *Blowup* as evidence that the camera is a poor symbol for the penis, and finds the gun and the fast car more suitable analogies for the camera as a weapon. She quotes from a camera ad ("Just aim, focus and shoot") to prove that the camera is sold as a predatory weapon, but admits that it seems to be all bluff, "like a man's fantasy of having a gun, knife or tool between his legs", but since a man no more fantasises about having a car between his legs than having a camera there the symbolism gets a bit complicated.

All the same, she insists, the photographer is a predatory animal:

> To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them they can never have, it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as the camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a sublimated murder—a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time.

In the late 19th century, Mrs Cameron was daringly planting her tripod somewhat closer to the model than most photographers, risking a charge of undignified conduct in the hope of capturing all the beauty she could see in a face. It would never have occurred to her to get so close that the lens might find skin textures and blemishes invisible to the naked eye. (Any blemishes in her photographs were due to her mishandling of the wet collodion process, but some of her disasters in the dark room were fascinating; they could drench a face in tears or put madness into the eyes.) Since then, as W.B. wrote, "there has been an ever-growing compulsion" to push the lens closer to the object. I shall never forget the first big close-up I saw in a silent film. I was about twelve at the time. The screen was filled by a girl's face, too huge and overpowering to be human. I was in the front row, and the pores of her skin were like wire-netting. I wanted to back away.

SONTAG IS PROBABLY RIGHT to say that "photographs shock in so far as they show something novel." She is talking about the proliferation of atrocity images and suggesting that it's only one's "first encounter with the photographic inventory of ultimate horror" that retains the force of revelation. It's perhaps emblematic of the way photography has developed that Sontag at the age of twelve in July

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1945 and that I in the same year, but very much older, both had our first encounter with ultimate horror in the photographs of Belsen and Dachau. "What good was served by seeing them?" she asks. She doesn't exactly answer, but "something went dead, something is still crying."

The cameraman's compulsion to get in close is not confined to the human face: the back of the head and every other part of the body have become good subjects. The soft murder has become a soft dismemberment, and Sontag uses another of Antonioni's films, his documentary on China, to focus on the fragmentation of the human image in the West and the highly critical response of a people whose ideology ties its photography to the "family group" convention. For instance, Antonioni's sequence in the square in Peking, where the Chinese on political pilgrimage gather, was practically limited to shots of the pilgrims waiting to be photographed. According to his Chinese critics, the desire of the masses to be photographed in Tien An Men Square

> is a reflection of their deep revolutionary feelings. But with bad intentions, Antonioni, instead of showing this reality, took shots only of people's clothing, movement and expressions: here, someone's ruffled hair; there, people peering, their eyes dazzled by the sun: one moment their sleeves; another, their trousers. . . .

In the West, we have not by any means dropped the convention of the family group, and at weddings it has now become the most important part of the ceremony. If it's a church wedding in England it's as essential that the church porch is visible in the background as it is that the visiting Chinese are unmistakably grouped in Tien An Men Square. When the American photographer Elliot Erwitt was asked (in *Interviews with Master Photographers*, published by Paddington Press) if he ever felt that his presence as a photographer influenced the event, he mentioned that he had had an assignment to photograph weddings all over the country for a love issue of *Life*:

> I was appalled—they would have had the weddings on their heads if it was useful to your photography. I once had some people stand in a particular position that was more convenient for me so that when they released the rose petals at the end of the ceremony they all fell in the wrong place.

I recently saw an album of photographs devoted to one working-class wedding which confirms Sontag's observation that the popularity of photographs is "ultimately an affirma-

History and Society
Essays by R. H. Tawney
Edited with an Introduction by J. M. WINTER
An introduction to ten of Tawney's historical essays, affording a full evaluation of the evolution and the significance of his approach to economic history. 0 7100 8953 8, £7.95

The National Movement in Scotland
JACK BRAND
A look at the SNP and the reason for its remarkable rise to prominence in Scotland is given in this timely study.
0 7100 8866 3, £9.95

Social and Cultural Change in Contemporary Wales
Edited by GLYN WILLIAMS
A collection of papers discussing recent research on Wales in many different disciplines, looking at such topics as second home ownership and economic peripheralism.
0 7100 8864 7, paper £5.95

The Politics of Legitimacy
Struggles in a Belfast Community
FRANK BURTON
The author's principal concern is to explain the existence of IRA ideology and politics in terms of the socio-historical conditions of the Northern Irish society. *International Library of Sociology.*
0 7100 8966 X, £6.95

Feminism and Socialism in China
ELISABETH CROLL
A unique opportunity to study the construction of a broadly-based women's movement, its ideological and structural development over a number of decades, and, in particular, its often ambiguous relationship with a parallel movement to establish socialism. 0 7100 8816 7, £8.95

ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL
39 Store Street, London WC1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of kitsch." The members of the wedding were photographed in so many different groupings that there were about twenty large colour photographs. They were fastened between padded covers bound in white kid, and when the album was opened it played *The Wedding March*.

ANY ATTEMPT to have included illustrations in Sontag's book would have been too selective. Out of the countless millions of photographs already taken and on the increase every moment of every day and night there is not one that does not have a claim to be reproduced, if only because when the word "all" appears in her generalisations, she seems to mean "all." "Photography", she writes, "democratises all experiences . . . all photographs promote nostalgia, all photographs are *memento mori*", and the unwritten "all" is no less certainly meant when she writes "a photograph is both pseudo-presence and a token of absence."

She has allowed the publisher to reproduce one photograph on the dust-cover. It is a Daguerreotype of 1850, by an unknown photographer, of another unknown photographer and his assistant displaying a dim photograph of a family group, a mother with her three children, the youngest seated on her lap. With a few minor changes it could be the first family group that included myself. My mother had answered the knock of an itinerant photographer. She put on her best hat because we were to be "taken" outdoors, in a row between the mean little gate posts to show that the front door didn't open straight on to the street. I was young enough to be held by her, but it was a tight squeeze to get the other two in line beside her. Then the photographer opened his shutter at the very moment I flung out my arm and knocked my mother's hat sideways. We all look sort of crushed. I hated it when I was older. I felt almost as guilty as the photographer for its perpetration; it not only showed my mother's hat all askew, but registered her distraught expression.

One of Sontag's essays includes a powerful account of the work of Diane Arbus. It is probably an extended or re-written version of a review of the Arbus retrospective held at the Museum of Modern Art in 1972, the year after her suicide. I saw the exhibition when it was put on in London. The exhibits were terrifyingly obvious examples of the photograph as soft murder. I happen to recall one of a plump, placid couple in late middle-age sitting opposite one another in comfortable armchairs in their neat, homely "lounge." The scene is the epitome of domesticity except that the couple is stark naked. It makes it hard for me to accept Sontag's assertion that all photographs beautify.

Arbus found her social misfits, genetic freaks and sexual deviates in nudist camps, drag balls, fairs and mental hospitals, and if there was a terrible sameness about her work it was partly because she gave her camera the power "to insinuate anguish, kinkiness, mental illness" into photographs of ordinary people. She was born into the Jewish upper-middle class and was by profession a fashion photographer, but wrote that she suffered from never having felt adversity. She sought to live dangerously by finding her way into the lower depths and making friends with some of its natives in much the same spirit as those Victorian ladies who went exploring alone in darkest Africa, armed with an umbrella instead of a camera. By winning the confidence of some of these social pariahs, Arbus was able to photograph them in the full frontal formal poses which they themselves considered would show them at their dignified best, and which, in fact, exaggerated their repulsiveness. But the umbrella was a better defence than the camera and after what Sontag calls her season in hell, Arbus can be said to have died of psychic wounds.

PLACING HER PIECE ON Arbus so that it would be immediately followed by her most provocative

The Jewish Quarterly **1953-1978**

'A magazine that is ready to explore every aspect of Jewish life, without strings, false sentiments and blinkers' (Chaim Raphael)

Coming shortly

SPECIAL JUBILEE EDITION of this magazine which, for the last 25 years, reflected the best in *Jewish Writing Today* throughout the world.

Acclaimed as 'a forum of uncompromising integrity' (*Barnet Litvinoff*), 'a most impressive contribution to informed enquiry into Jewish writing' (*David Daiches*), 'happily combining the Jewish and English elements' (*George Steiner*)—

Single copy 95p; (including postage)
Annual subscription £3.00 ($10) post free

Orders (with remittance) to be sent to:

THE JEWISH QUARTERLY

Subscription & Mailing Dept.: **34 Upper Berkeley Street, London W1H 7PG**

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

statement was good strategy by Sontag, and it is with evident glee that she announces that photography "has managed to carry out the grandiose, century-old threats of a Surrealist takeover of the modern sensibility, while most of the pedigreed candidates have dropped out of the race."

I think we have to remember at this point that Sontag was growing up at a time when Abstract Expressionism was having its greatest triumphs. To a sensitive young American the "revolt against calculation" was what 20th-century painting was all about. The "pedigreed candidates" she mentions were the members of the Surrealist Group in Paris. The Surrealist painters had *their* great time in the 1930s and '40s. Almost all of them are dead, and it is a long while since any of them hoped to change the world. What Sontag has against them is that they were *figurative*, and she finds the idea of figurative painting in the 20th century so contemptible that she casts around for an insult and calls the paintings "mostly wet dreams", not a well-considered phrase from someone who admires Pollock's drip paintings. It must be quite confusing to have to argue, however cleverly, that nothing could be more surreal than a photograph "which virtually produces itself and with a minimum of effort", and at the same time be aware that André Breton's famous definition of Surrealism—"pure psychic automatism"—fits some of Pollock's paintings like a glove.

Official Portrait

O, but you should have seen him on the day! . . .
Such robes, so debonair,
And such assurance!
He looked a picture.

Well, he has been one,
Paid for, exhibited, and hung
Where an Old Master ought to hang,
Above his hearth,
An oiled celebrity
These twenty years.

And now they take him down to clean him,
And find what's often found behind a picture:
A blank; a wall,
Shielded against dust,
Never exposed to light,
That might look whiter than the wall surrounding,
But for those rat's-tails of grey fluff,
Old cobwebs, damp, and other blemishes.

Are these a truth about him
The picture tried to hide?
O how did the face look,
And the wall, how did the wall,
The night he turned to it,
Who has turned back in oils,
So smiled, and seemed so confident,
These twenty years,
Above the fireplace that he used to block?

Michael Burn

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Frank Ormsby

A Memory of Summer

Most of that summer I remember now
A girl with supple arms, in her hands
The blackest pot of shamrocks,
Or by a brimming river under trees,
Kissed to the tolling of a monastery bell,
And cobwebs laced with water near our heads.

And I remember what was in her eyes
The first dawn that found us in a room together.
And a garden rinsed with rain.

Half of what happened there I carried back
Through murderous towns. She kept the other half.
And bloodier summers may have left their track
Before we step that road again or laugh
Together, or again my fingers trace
Her waking face.

But if tomorrow I should cross her way
Where walls are scorched and broken and the trees
Are sunk in pavements we will make a day,
If not to cure, at least to mock or ease
The times with loving, its hours as bright and still
As in that summer, as unrepeatable.

David Rokeah

Alone

When did I lose my faith
when did I find my faith again
there is no trace in my diary
nor in the public records.

Alone with my heretical speculations
alone with the unresolved arithmetic of my loves
alone with the intricate heritage of my dead fathers
alone with Jerusalem in exile
alone with the Mediterranean Sea which is God
alone with the desert which is God

I was born on the day of the Temple's destruction
I was born on the day of Agnon's birth

translated by Matthew Mead

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EAST & WEST

Letter from Belgrade

Tito, After 30 Years

By Carl Gustav Ströhm

IF THERE IS a historic date in the recent history of Eastern Europe and the Communist movement, historic in the sense that its repercussions are still felt today, it is the 28th of June 1948. On that day 30 years ago the "Cominform", the amalgam of European Communist parties under Soviet leadership, condemned the Yugoslav Communist Party and Marshal Tito for "hostility" towards Moscow. This so-called "First Cominform Resolution" stated that the Yugoslav leaders had "embarked upon the path of direct deception of their Party and their people", had deviated from Marxism-Leninism, and would, with their "nationalistic notions", only allow their country to "degenerate" into "an ordinary bourgeois republic." The resolution ended with a clear call by the Soviets to what they called the "sound members" of the Yugoslav Communist Party to overthrow Tito and his government and put a "new internationalist leadership" in its place.

The first point to note is that today, after the lapse of three decades, substantial elements in old Soviet thinking and procedure are still as operative as ever. There is even continuity on the personal level in that Mikhail Suslov, one of the instigators of the anti-Yugoslav Cominform line, is to this day a member of the Soviet Politburo and even now still plays a decisive role on ideological questions. Even a quarter-of-a-century after Stalin's death there is no change in the tendency to label any move towards independence or individual thought and action within the Communist movement as "bourgeois nationalism" or "betrayal" or "anti-Soviet conspiracy."

Basically the Soviet Union's attitude to Tito at that time was the same as its attitude today to Santiago Carrillo, much-attacked leader of the Spanish Communist party—to Alexander Dubcek, deposed leader of the Czech party, yesterday; and to Imre Nagy, the murdered Prime Minister of the Hungarian government during the Budapest tragedy, the day before yesterday. The parallel continues with a curious symbolism of historic dates. The execution of Nagy who, as a Communist and a "Muscovite", had had the temerity to proclaim Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and the introduction of a "pluralist democracy" in his country, was announced on 17 June 1958—and that, as they like to say, was no accident, comrades. The Soviet Union is rigidly determined to demonstrate that any form of deviation or independence in the Communist world is a hopeless enterprise. If there is no other way, the tanks roll in, as in East Berlin in 1953; Budapest in 1956; or Prague in 1968.

WHEN MARSHAL TITO at the head of the Yugoslav Communist party offered resistance to the Soviets in 1948, when he refused to make the journey to Bucharest to "justify" himself (he knew that a Stalinist execution squad would probably be awaiting him), the Western world gave the Yugoslavs barely a chance. Many people thought that the Belgrade-Moscow quarrel was some kind of sophisticated Communist manoeuvre in deception. In any case, it was inconceivable that little Yugoslavia could maintain itself against the mighty Soviet Union. People in West European capitals gave Tito a maximum of two to three weeks survival, and it was Stalin himself who said: "I will move my little finger and there will be no more Tito. . . ."

In this particular case, however, the leaders of the great Soviet Union were wrong, showing once more how difficult it is, even today, for Kremlin leaders to understand the mentality of other nations. The Yugoslav Communist party's functionaries—unlike so many others in Eastern Europe—had not returned home in the Red Army's baggage train but had had to survive on their own through years of partisan warfare; they had, accordingly, not been infiltrated and corrupted by the Soviet secret service. At their head stood a charismatic leader, whose already almost mythical halo was proof even against the overwhelming charisma of Josef Stalin. Further factors were the special pride and warlike tradition of the Balkan spirit.

Tito once aptly described the difficulty of his situation to an intimate circle of friends. Asked why, at the summer Party Rally of 1948 *after* the breach with Moscow, he had actually called for cheers for Stalin, he replied: "That had to be

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

—because of the masses. We had to be very careful. There was no doubting Stalin's authority. Had we gone too fast, we would have divorced ourselves from the masses. Had we gone too slowly, the Russians would have overrun us. We could not let ourselves become excited. We had to leave it to time to show up the Soviet Union's behaviour, so that the masses themselves would say: 'Down with Stalin!' . . . "

THE WORLD-HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE of the 1948 breach is indisputable. Tito was the first "Communist heretic" to manage to maintain himself successfully against Moscow. In this sense he was the precursor of those Communist reformers who aspire to independence—from the Euro-Communists to the Maoist-Chinese, from the Prague spring to Ceausescu's Romania. Naturally this "Yugoslav path" is not without its contradictions and disagreeable attendant phenomena.

Nevertheless there cannot be the smallest doubt that 28 June 1948 was a day that "changed the world." Yugoslavia's defection, like that of China later, gave the West some relief and a breathing space in face of the overwhelming pressure from growing Bolshevik power. Now, however, the question arises whether the 86-year-old Tito's heirs will be able to preserve the independence he won; and from the point of view not only of Yugoslavia but also of Europe much will depend on the answer.

"YUGOSLAVIA TODAY is a sort of constitutional monarchy which will turn into a republic in the foreseeable future. We know how the monarchy functions. Whether the Republic can function, only the future can show. . . . " At first sight this remark by an old and intimate connoisseur of the Belgrade political scene sounds strange, but it contains a core of truth.

In Yugoslavia today Josip Broz Tito, 86 years old, elected life President both of the Party and the State, possesses all the external attributes of a King—he cannot be deposed, attacked, or even criticised. In addition, however, one of the constitutional realities of this Communist country is that he is a sort of *pouvoir neutre*, a force and an authority above day-to-day politics, divorced from the electoral battle (in this case that of his own Communist Party). Anyone who classifies Tito as a totalitarian dictator alongside Stalin (or even Hitler) has failed to grasp the nature of the "Titoist system." In the first place, Tito does not rule by fear and terror. Admittedly by Western standards the Titoist system, as it has developed over the last three decades, is in essential respects authoritarian. Political opponents or critics, particularly if they organise themselves and even more if they propose to take any action, do not have an easy time of it. The ruling party, the League of Communists, keeps all key positions in society and government firmly in its own hand. The Yugoslav police are efficiently organised and very well informed. Nevertheless there are wide areas in social, economic, and private life in which State and Party do not in practice intervene.

To quote once more my Belgrade friend, a keen observer of the Yugoslav scene; "In the Soviet Union only a small section of some few thousand people have the right of foreign travel in the West. By contrast in Yugoslavia only a small section of a few hundred political undesirables do not possess this right. . . . " Anyone who is not conspicuous as a political opponent in Yugoslavia can leave the country at any time as a tourist, as a foreign "guest worker" or even on the casual excursion—to look around Trieste across the border and do some Italian shopping, for instance.

The situation is similar in Yugoslavia's cultural life. There is no "socialist realism" and no party line which Yugoslav authors must follow when they write or Yugoslav artists when they paint. An author who clashes with the Party (in many cases it could be said even with Tito personally) is attacked in the Communist press and sometimes is silenced. On occasion his books will be sought in vain on the shelves of the bookshops; in not a few cases, however, he is allowed to carry on.

Dobrica Cosic, a fine novelist, is a good example. He was once the "poet laureate" of Titoism, a member of the Serbian Party's Central Committee and Tito's companion on his world tours; today he is "in conflict with authority" and has resigned from the Party and Central Committee. He continues to be attacked from official sources for "Serbian nationalism", but his books are still published; although he does not appear on any best-seller list, everyone in Belgrade knows that he is one of the most, if not *the* most, widely read authors in Serbia and throughout Yugoslavia.

BY WESTERN STANDARDS, of course, it is not a satisfactory situation. There is, however, the question whether Western standards can or should be applied at all to Yugoslavia, those lands which have emerged from the legacies of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the Turkish Empire. Tito, the "Monarch", has brought this country almost a 30-year period of peace and it has led over the last three decades to relative prosperity. Today motorways criss-cross the old, harsh, impoverished Balkan countryside. Anyone driving through Bosnia and Serbia sees small new single-family houses going up everywhere, built

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by men who have worked some years "in the West" (mostly in West Germany as *Gast-Arbeiter*) and have come home with their savings.

In the Lika villages and along the old military frontier, where the peasants were formerly so poor that they could not even buy shoes for their children, young men now fetch their girls by car for the evening dance at the discotheque. On Sundays the peasants still sometimes walk to church (or, if Moslem, to the mosque) wearing their *opanken*, the woven peasant sandals, and clad in their national costume; but the sons and daughters of these same peasants wear jeans and *T*-shirts (or the latest Safari Look).

THOSE WHO KNEW the old rural Balkans, that symphony of colour and folklore, of melody and drama, are saddened that the lovely country dances formerly to be seen on the street of any village are now produced only for the tourists. But this change and modernisation is a reality of the Tito era; for better or worse the thinking and emotions of these peoples have been modernised and changed. The main point is that the modest but distinct economic development and freedom of movement (even without political liberties) have created a broad section of citizenry with something to lose—a little house, a car, a bank account, prospects of professional advancement.

In internal Yugoslav politics Tito's success is primarily to be explained by the fact that the Partisan commander and Communist chieftain appears to the ordinary man today as the bulwark of stability, prosperity, and independence. The non-politically minded in Yugoslavia can frequently be heard to say: "As long as Tito is alive we know that the Russians will not dare attack us. As long as he is alive the government will leave us to earn our money and live our lives in peace. . . ." Perhaps Tito's greatest merit is that he is no fanatic. His style of government is reminiscent of "enlightened absolutism"; in a certain sense it is a benevolent dictatorship exercised in the name of the so-called working class.

During all these years Tito personally has never totally identified himself with the Party or the Party line. Again and again at moments of crisis—e.g., during the dispute about "Croat national-communists" in the early 1960s or later during the conflict with the "Serb liberals"—the old Partisan Marshal has to some extent acted as the people's advocate against his own bureaucrats. Here again, you may say, one can see aspects of a "plebiscitary kingdom": the President and Party leader calls the Party to order in the name of the people.

At the same time, in the complex multinational state of Yugoslavia, Tito has so far acted as a sort of arbiter between ideologies, functionaries, and technocrats—not a dictator arbitrarily fixing targets but a "Worker"—a final court of appeal, balancing conflicting interests, and bringing them into line, helping one political trend to win the day over another by shifting his weight in the scales.

Here, of course, lies the question-mark against the future of the Titoist system. As long as Tito is alive the various national groupings—Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Macedonians, Slovenes—accept his decisions and awards. The mere fact that the President exists somewhere in the background leads to a certain rationalisation and limitation of potential clashes of interest.

When, however, one day Tito is no longer there, a new situation will arise—perhaps, above all, "psychologically." As things look at present there is not and cannot be a "successor" possessing even a fraction of Tito's authority. So we are confronted once more with the façade of present-day Yugoslavia: however much "Monarchy" may bear the imprint of the ruler's peculiarities, it also invariably implies stability. The Republic, however, which will follow when the monarch no longer exists, may bring with it conflicts and uncertainties. It is curious (though, at the same time, it is I suppose only logical) that recognition of this fact is now prevalent even among Communists, particularly in a country so strategically exposed, so politically vulnerable.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FILM

The Shadows in the Cave

Some Thoughts on Cinema—By P. N. Furbank

So wonderful a film as Buñuel's *That Obscure Object of Desire* appeases a lot of cravings, and quietens many of the fears, that one has in regard to cinema. One's view about cinema, mine anyway, tends to grow too technical; and this film is a corrective. For what it displays is a man of vision and humanity who can do what he likes with film. He is technically inventive, of course, perhaps more than any other director—a most extraordinary trick is brought off in the present film, which one perhaps shouldn't reveal—but he is so only for the reason that any good artist is: that is to say, he innovates when he needs to, and follows traditional procedures when they suffice, and in either case for no other reason than that his "subject" dictates it. However, this is not an article about Buñuel. So let me single out merely one feature of this film, its *pace*.

The fundamental problem in the cinema, as in photography as an art, is, so it seems to me, irrelevancy or superfluity. You open the camera lens, and what floods in is both the things that you want and the things that you don't want. (Among the other arts, only surrealist "automatic writing" offers anything similar.) Poor old photography! How much prejudice it has always had to fight, and how justified the prejudice. Photography can never, I think, be one of the major arts. The appeal of the photographs that one most cherishes (and "cherish" is just the word one would apply in the case of portraits by Alvin Langdon Coburn) is always for extrinsic as well as intrinsic reasons—for nostalgia, relic-worship, sentimentalities of all kinds.

Not so with the cinema. The cinema (films like Buñuel's prove it) is one of the major arts. But the same problem, that if you open a camera lens *everything* rushes in, affects the film-director as well as the photographer, Let us suppose that, in a film, a waiter in a restaurant has to bring a message to one of the diners. Now, all the sequence may be meant to convey is just that one item of information. In which case it doesn't matter what the waiter looks like, or whether he be old or young, tall or short, or whether he approaches from the right or the left, or indeed anything about him. None the less, since this is a film and not a novel, one cannot just say "A waiter came to the table with a message." There must, inescapably, be concrete detail, and this detail will be superfluous.

The realistic 19th-century novel, it is true, provides a good deal of not strictly relevant detail; the novelist feels a duty to clothe his characters, give them recognisable features, make them do such things as open doors, etc.—even, in the case of Tolstoy, to introduce insignificant accidents, like a garment catching itself on a nail. (It was Proust's avoidance of this that, according to himself, constituted his greatest claim to originality. "*Pas une seule fois*", he wrote to Robert Dreyfus, "*un de mes personnages ne ferme une fenêtre, ne se lave les mains, ne passe un pardessus, ne dit une formule de présentation.*") Nevertheless these novelists had to invent every one of these details; they were not produced mechanically by the mere opening of a lens.

The Eisenstein line on this problem is that *montage* justifies all. Film, at first sight the most "concrete" of media, is in fact the most abstract. The cinema has little relation to the art of photography, and the detail of shots does not, or anyway need not, matter; what matters is the relation between one shot and another and the concept thereby engendered. (Hugh Kenner saw close connections between this and Ezra Pound's "ideograms.")

Fellini has a different solution. It is that you "doctor" and reconstruct reality so thoroughly before you photograph it that what you are photographing is a *tableau* and not an observed piece of the world at all. In this way, you obtain the desired control of your material. This is not a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

solution offering salvation to photography proper. The *tableaux* of photographers are merely desperate imitations of paintings and, however sophisticated, take us back to the "property" column and the cardboard backdrop of Venice.

They may be lovely and eye-catching, but they almost instantly reveal their hollowness; they only exist, as art, for the instant in which you first catch sight of them. You cannot scan or explore them—not as art, I mean; for you can do so for other purposes. In the cinema, however, things are different. For there the viewing-time granted for any particular "frame" is closely controlled; you as spectator could not extend it even if you wanted to (or, as Samuel Butler once maliciously suggested, stand in conspicuous reverence before it for a full half-hour by your watch). And this, in a sense, solves our problem. There is a controlled relation between what you are invited to view and the time within which you are invited to view it; and, granted this constraint, there may be said to be no irrelevancy of superfluity. I will remind you of that triumphant sequence in Fellini's *Casanova*, in which the hero glimpses his long-lost mother in a box at the opera; then, lingering after the performance, he witnesses giant chandeliers being lowered and extinguished with huge fans; and finally, having carried his mother to her carriage, he takes his farewell view of her—a face infinitely aged and tremulous, almost vanishing behind her veils and the carriage-window and the pelting snow. It is an unforgettable passage, an epitome of the fugitive and the dissolving, expressive of just those qualities in Casanova's picaresque existence. But we are not to think of these magical frames as things to stop and explore, like a painting. (The procedure has nothing to do with that philistine trick, found in later Pasolini films, of making your shots resemble gallery paintings, Pre-Raphaelites or Monets or whatever.)

WITH BUÑUEL, in *That Obscure Object of Desire*, the principle is essentially the same. There is a difference, because most of his sequences are visually realistic—I mean, we are not being shown, as in a Fellini film, spectacles that astonish, like giant chandeliers being extinguished or a giantess being bathed by dwarfs. And, for this reason, Buñuel gives us less time to linger over his shots. But the rhythm, like Fellini's, is most masterly, and there is never a moment when one can feel that one has exhausted a "frame."

But by how many questions and doubts, none the less, is the notion of cinema assailed. There is a contrast between the cinema and both the drama and the novel. A play is continually renewed by being performed by different actors and under a different director. This is how a play lives and survives to posterity. And equally, every time you read a novel you "realise" its scenes differently and in terms of different mental images, and this is how a novel keeps alive. And on the other hand, a painting, though always the same as a physical object, is scanned differently by every viewer and differently by the same viewer each time that he looks at it; and it is in this sense that it lives and is not exhaustible. By contrast, a film is just what it is. It demands neither "realising" nor scanning; and the belief that one sees much more in a film at a second or third viewing is, to my mind, false. I went to see *That Obscure Object of Desire* again in the same week and I enjoyed it almost as intensely, though certain surprises had, inevitably, changed into "surprises" in a less literal sense. And I scrutinised certain incidents particularly carefully, to see if I could understand them better than I had before. But in general, I wouldn't say that I *learned* much more about the film.

This is an important fact about the cinema, and a limiting one. Certain films—say Fellini's *Satyricon* or *Amacord*, or Buñuel's *Nazarin* or *That Obscure Object of Desire*—are masterworks and deserving of continual study; but they do not subsist in such an available form as *Anna Karenina* or even *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*. One has to wait till some art-cinema shows them again. And even if one could possess them in the form of video-tape, there would be a doubt overshadowing them, in the fact that they are dead and immutable objects. The critic André Bazin, in *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma* (1958), likened the films to a death-mask. They were "mummified change." And Hanns Eisler, in *Composing for Films* (1947), expresses a similar feeling that there is something sinister in the film as such. He suggests that movie-music was introduced, partly, in order to appease unconsciously-dreaded evil spirits.

> Music was introduced as a kind of antidote against the picture. The need was felt to spare the spectator the unpleasantness involved in seeing effigies of living, acting, and even speaking persons, who were at the same time silent.

There is in this disturbing deadness and unchangeability of films a minor, and dubious, justification for the Hollywood habit of *remaking* very popular films.

There is a better answer to the problem, but this would entail our learning to know films by heart—that is to say, to acquire the faculty of running them through in our head. This is not at all impossible, and I can even do it in some very minor degree myself. But the faculty would have to be developed greatly. And if it were to be, it

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would be the answer to the question, how do films *exist* as art-works? A film would be, not so much a particular length of celluloid, as that which a film-lover could recreate in his or her imagination. A film, in this respect, would stand somewhere between a poem and a painting. One would not be able to learn it by heart so completely as a poem, but rather more completely than one could a painting, in that it is less of a unique physical object than a painting and more of a sequence of intelligible ideas.

LET ME TURN to another problematic aspect of the cinema—film-music. One sometimes wonders if the films can possibly be a serious art, when, in them, effects are deliberately created by music which is not meant to be attended to, music which does not pass through the spectator's consciousness (or, to put it in a word, by *muzak*). This seems a basic artistic absurdity—more offensive, perhaps, when the music is by Mozart or Brahms, because of the implication that culture can be "raided" in this way (the way that advertising raids it); but just as ridiculous when it is "music" written especially for the film.

Movie-music is one of the "naïve" elements in the cinema, going back to its infancy. It originated partly as a way of drowning the noise of the projector: partly also, I do think, for the comforting and propitiatory reasons suggested by Hanns Eisler. And it had antecedents in the between-the-acts music of the theatre, and in the "hurry music", "combat music" and "love-music" accompanying performances in 19th-century theatres. As the cinema developed, one might have expected it to shed music, but on the contrary it has clung to it and allowed it to grow into a fearful parasite. Sophisticated American films, at the moment, are often unbearable because of their subliminal music, their music which short-circuits the consciousness and makes direct and degrading assault on the nervous system. Oddly, Hanns Eisler, though a purist, suggests there might occasionally be a legitimate use for subliminal music. It will be seen that I am bound to disagree, if my notion of "learning films by heart" is valid at all; for one cannot learn by heart what has never passed through the consciousness.

But indeed, I'm inclined to take an extreme view—that music should not and cannot function *as* music in films. For after all, even if one is consciously listening to it, one is not listening to it at all in the spirit that one does in the concert-hall or the opera-house—not, that is to say, in a properly musical way at all. Thus, music in the films, as I see it, has to be the *idea* of music and announce itself as such. Immensely telling, in those extraordinary last moments of *That Obscure Object of Desire*, is the allusion to *Tristan and Isolde*—but that is precisely what it was, an allusion to the *idea* of Wagner's opera.

HOW EXCELLENT, though, Hanns Eisler's book is! He sees it as a basic fallacy in traditional movie-music (a fallacy with confused recollections of the *Gesamptkunstwerk* idea) that it should reinforce or imitate the action on the screen; whereas, as he rightly holds, it should, if it is to have any integrity, set itself up in opposition to what is on the screen. He goes on to attack the concept of mood-music, and, extending from that, the whole idea of "mood" as an artistic concept. (He should have thrown in "atmosphere", an equally unprofitable term.) "It is hardly an exaggeration", he says, "to state that the concept of mood is altogether unsuitable to the motion picture as well as to advanced music. It is no accident that pictures supposed to express mood usually resemble photographed landscapes or genre paintings, and strike one as spurious and stilted. And one cannot imagine Schönberg or Stravinsky stooping to compose genre music."

Warming to his task, Eisler says sweepingly of traditional movie-music that what it really is is *advertising*. (We must remember that he is writing thirty years ago, so that his remarks outwardly "date" a little.)

> It [movie-music] points with unswerving agreement to everything that happens on the screen, and creates the illusion that the effect that is to be achieved by the whole picture has already been achieved. . . . The whole form language of current cinema music derives from advertising. The *motif* is the slogan; the instrumentation, the standardised picturesque; the accompaniments to animated cartoons are advertising jokes; and sometimes it is as though the music replaced the names of the commercial articles that the motion pictures do not yet dare mention directly.

I will quote another remark by Hanns Eisler, which sets one's mind running in a different direction.

> It is hardly accidental that the early motion pictures did not resort to the seemingly most natural device of accompanying the pictures by dialogues of concealed actors, as is done in the Punch and Judy shows, but always resorted to music, although in the old horror or slapstick pictures it had hardly any relation to the plots.

I have always been intrigued by the way that 19th-century novelists, for instance Hardy and Conrad, improvise film-techniques and seem to be summoning the cinema into being. But it is only

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

recently I realised that Diderot *nearly* invented the talkies, in his *Salon* of 1765. And the point over which he went astray was the one referred to by Eisler. Well, not the only point. But, if not as an invention, then as an allegory, the passage pleases me greatly. Diderot tells his friend Grimm that he is not able to describe the star-attraction of this year's *salon*, Fragonard's *The High Priest Corésus Immolates Himself To Save Callirhoé*, because it was no longer on show by the time he arrived. He will thus have to fill up his article by recounting a dream he had after a morning at the exhibition and an evening spent reading Plato.

> It seemed that I was enclosed in the place known as Plato's cave. It was a long and dark cavern. I was sitting in the midst of a crowd of men, women and children. We all had our feet and hands in chains and our head so firmly secured by wooden clamps that it was impossible to turn it. But the thing which surprised me was that the majority of my prison-mates were drinking, laughing and singing, without appearing in the least troubled by their chains, and you would have said, so far as appearances went, that it was their natural situation in life and they had no desire for anything different. It even seemed to me that people looked rather hostilely at those who tried to free their feet or hands or head or help others to do so; that they called them evil names; that they shrunk away from them, as if they had an infectious disease; and that, when any mishap occurred in the cave, they would be the first to be blamed. Installed in the way that I have explained to you, we all had our backs turned to the entrance of this habitation, and were only able to look at its far end, which was hung with an immense canvas or curtain.
>
> Behind us, there were kings, ministers, priests, doctors, apostles, prophets, theologians, politicians, rogues, charlatans, makers of illusions, and the whole troupe of merchants of hopes and fears. Each had a collection of little coloured and transparent images, of the kind suitable to their own condition; and these images were so well constructed, so well painted, so numerous and so varied, that there was all that was needed to represent every scene of life, comic, tragic, or burlesque.
>
> These charlatans, I then perceived, placed as they were between us and the entrance to the cave, had hanging behind them a great lamp, in the light of which they exposed their images; and the shadows of these, passing over our heads and increasing in size as they travelled, were cast upon the great screen at the end of the cavern, forming whole scenes—scenes so natural, so true to life that we took them for real. Sometimes they made us laugh, till we split our sides; sometimes they made us weep salt tears—a fact which will seem less strange to you when I say that behind the screen other subordinate rogues, in the pay of the former ones, supplied these shadows with the voices, the accents, the speech appropriate to their roles.
>
> Despite the enchantment of this illusion, there were some among us in the crowd who were suspicious of it, and from time to time shook their chains and grew even more eager to escape their clamps and turn their heads; but immediately one or other of the charlatans behind us began to exclaim, in a voice of thunder: "No turning the head! . . . Woe to him who shakes his chain! . . . Respect the clamps! . . . " I will tell you another time what happened to those who ignored these warnings, what risks they ran, what persecutions they had to suffer. I leave that for the day when we are discussing philosophy. . . .

THE SCREEN, so Diderot continues, seemed at first filled merely with disordered scenes and action: men weeping, laughing or gnawing their knuckles; drownings, hangings and apotheoses. But after a time a meaning and a story emerged. It began with a gripping scene of maenadic riot. A tender love-scene followed. And next, one was in a vast and splendid temple, at a scene of solemn sacrifice. ("But my friend, do you realise", exclaims Grimm, "that at the rate you are going, a single one of your dreams would furnish a whole gallery?") The film continues to unreel, until (as you may have predicted) it freezes into a "still" which, so Grimm informs Diderot with due awe, exactly corresponds to Fragonard's painting. And at this point the allegory resolves back into art-criticism. For Diderot's excursion into cinema and concoction of a (somewhat Griffiths-type) film-script is meant, among other things, as a judgment on this particular painting. (The picture is now in the Louvre.) Grimm, in fact, has thought the painting ever so slightly Hollywoodish. In the imaginary dialogue, he tells Diderot:

> In the cave, all that you were witnessing was *simulacra* of human beings; and Fragonard himself, had you seen his painting, would have presented you with no more than such *simulacra*. It was a fine dream you dreamed; it is a fine dream that he has painted. But whenever one loses sight of it for a moment, one feels afraid his canvas will have rolled up and disappeared as yours did, and its sublime and touching phantoms will have dissolved like those of the night. . . .

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONFERENCE

Letter from Germany

Arguing about Hitler

By Karl-Heinz Janssen

HERE WE ARE over thirty years on—the *Reich* in ruins, the East German homelands lost, Prussia wiped out, the old society and its values destroyed, the outlines of the new one not yet firm, the world resounding with the rattle of arms, hearts full of unspoken fear, facing nuclear catastrophe, inflation, unemployment, terrorists—and above it all, over and over again: *Hitler, Hitler, Hitler.* One can hardly bear to listen to it any longer.

But no, the funereal work is not yet finished. His evil spirit is still at work in various forms—in the sub-culture of pornography, in the sensationalism of the media where he is camouflaged under a cloak of documentation and nostalgia, in the vandalisation of gravestones and the brawling of a handful of neo-Nazi hooligans. In autumn 1977 it emerged, even more menacing and sinister, in a flood of hysterical letters from German newspaper-readers, and in the anti-Semitic pranks of juvenile Army officers and anti-Jewish jokes from schoolboys. So Hitler is not yet exorcised. See the recent argument about Minister-President Filbinger (which led to his resignation) and the argument about "tradition" in the *Bundeswehr*—whose Inspector-General, at last and far too late, criticised the doings of one old ex-General (Rudel) as subversive of society, but at the same time praised another old ex-General (Molders) because he had been a brave soldier—as if both had not faithfully served the mass-murderer.

THIS SAID, LET ME TURN to the recent debate in Aschaffenburg on "Controversies of Contemporary History", and to the German première of Hans Jürgen Syberberg's film on Hitler, which film critics had previously to go to Paris to see. Assembled round a table were a number of "Hitler experts" of international repute, scholars as well as authors, although some of them had been at odds with each other, either overtly or covertly, for years and would have preferred to avoid any confrontation. Joachim Fest, for instance, who has written a biography and produced a film on Hitler, evidently thought it more useful to go to Japan rather than meet Professor Werner Maser from Speyer. Martin Broszat, Director of the *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* (Institute of Contemporary History) in Munich, was listed on the programme but excused himself at the last moment simply because of his reservations about Maser—surely a shining example of misconceived scholarly virtue. The organisers and audience could at least comfort themselves that Dr Eberhard Jäckel, the Stuttgart historian, and Professor J. P. Stern, the "*Germanist*" from London University, had not been frightened off, although they could have made the appearance of another of the participants in the debate an excuse—the British writer, David Irving, who turned up trumpeting his offer of £1,000 to anyone who could show him evidence of "a written order by Hitler for the murder of 'European' Jews."

On medical advice Dr Robert Kempner, the former Nuremberg prosecutor and now an old man, stayed away. Owing to his possible presence the *Rathaus* and the *Schlosstheater* had had to be surrounded by heavily armed police, and all briefcases were searched at the entrance—a windfall, as it happened, for the Prague team of TV camera-men. Right-wing extremists had made horrific murder threats against Kempner; and then, of course, there were the by-now obligatory bomb threats against Syberberg's film.

Right-wing extremists were among the audience for the public debate on the Sunday; and they even asked questions, with unusual politeness. Not to be overlooked were those old-fashioned high-collared gentlemen of the old school and those broad-shouldered bull-necked stolid ones whose riveted attention and expressive gestures suggested that they had once served the "great man" on whom the panel was sitting in judgment. Even Karl Wolff, the former SS-General (Chief-of-Staff to Himmler and liaison officer at the *Führer's* headquarters) was there, still a formidable figure, and accompanied by a pretty young wife. He had been persuaded to come by David Irving who, on his own and without the knowledge of the organisers, had invited a good dozen of such "crown witnesses." They proved not to be of much help to him.

THE AUDIENCE SEEMED to enjoy the argument. It illustrated perfectly both the high level but also

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weaknesses and temptations of so-called "Hitler research." On the one side were the professional historians such as Jäckel, Tyrell, and the rest, swearing by the interpretative-analytical method based on a foundation of archival fact; on the other the barrow-boys of history such as Maser and Irving, obsessed by misplaced documents, immersed in the tiniest of details. Between them sat the outsiders from the realms of philosophy, psychology and journalism such as the cultural critic Gert Kalow (*Hitler, an All-German Trauma*), the family planner Helm Stierlin (*Adolf Hitler: Family Sidelights*), and Sebastian Haffner who had just published his brilliant (and now best-selling) *Anmerkungen zu Hitler* (Notes about Hitler).

It was an object lesson in the mutual misunderstandings and animosities between an ascetic scholarship which all too easily takes refuge in the ivory tower of its own style, and a free-lance journalism which can afford to be bolder, and more speculative, but on the other hand is subject to the seductive though severe pressures of the literary market. Inevitably such an occasion turned into a kind of book fair for literary vanities, for author-publisher wheeling-dealing—some even had their glossy dust-jackets in front of them on the table. The debate was larded with pointed provocations and sarcastic gibes, and during the intervals both sides were busy peddling their grave suspicions.

Iring Fetscher, the Frankfurt political scientist whose father had been murdered by the Nazis, did lose his temper on one occasion when David Irving rambled on about the "free elections" in 1938. "I refuse to allow the German people to be so insulted!" (His indignation was understandable but everyone looked rather sorry for him; for a murdered father is an argument against Hitler, but is it one against Irving?) Eyebrows rose and ears flapped however, when Messrs Haffner (a former editor of *The Observer* in London) and Stern began to make their interventions, both observing British rules of "fair play" and in quiet modest tones (Haffner: "I propose to repay politeness with politeness").

THERE WAS LITTLE of this to be seen in the debate between David Irving and Werner Maser. Nevertheless the university-based historians would have done better not simply to have shrugged off the serious charges which both made against them. Irving—with the melancholy charm which has captured the hearts of so many widows of old Nazis whom he has cynically ridiculed, and of so many semi-forgotten domestics from the *Führer*'s "Berghof"—captivated the Aschaffenburg audience at first with his "joking and provoking." He made no attempt to conceal his "naughty methods"—"I write books which I must sell." He feels himself the chosen one since hearing personally (from Hitler's ear-nose-and-throat specialist) that "the *Führer* hoped there would one day be a British historian who would write a fair biography of him. . . ."

David Irving accused the German "historians' guild" of neglect of primary sources, original diaries, private letters, and protocol records; they shy away from "pedestrian work", he said, and are guilty of "in-breeding"; for years they have allegedly overlooked the fact that important source material has been subsequently amended in order to present the authors in a more favourable light and Hitler in a worse one. The professional historians countered by accusing Irving of failure to take into account hundreds of books and dissertations on Hitler and the Third Reich, and of working with neither sufficient intellectual seriousness nor scientific care. In fact it was the antithesis of objective, self-critical scholarship always open to self-correction when Irving shouted, "Don't you *want* to know the whole truth?"—it was in best Goebbels-*Sportpalast* style.

Professor Jäckel, normally a cool, calm, balanced person, and also Sebastian Haffner, were outraged when Irving airily brushed aside all the established proof that Hitler carried primary responsibility for mass murder. Gerald Fleming, a British writer, took pains to assemble proof of a direct chain of command between Hitler and the actual camp-murderers of Jews. Werner Maser, Irving's main competitor who always has some undiscovered source somewhere up his sleeve, attempted to disprove Irving's theory that Hitler was not directly responsible for the Holocaust from notes by Field-Marshal Keitel (hanged in Nuremberg) and time-table details of Hitler's air, rail, and road journeys. Eventually Syberberg put an end to this whole unedifying discussion by concluding: "I see through Irving's game—it's diabolical. . . ."

PROFESSOR MASER'S COMPLAINTS against German contemporary history were of a rather different nature. To some extent, he said, it persisted in pursuing an "undiscriminating anti-fascism" marked by the 1945–49 period when the first books were published; it looked upon research and the study of sources as too time-consuming and was content to pronounce high-sounding judgments based on second-hand quotations (and even "plagiarism").

In his irritation he undoubtedly far overshot the mark with his criticism, but some of the points he made might have been matters for discussion. Instead Maser's critics pounced with delight on the affair of Hitler's French son Jean

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Loret: Maser "discovered" him, but M. Loret-Hitler has meanwhile fallen out with his "patron" over a matter of royalties.

Jäckel (*angry*): "I regard the whole thing simply as sensation-mongering!" Maser (*darkly*): "We know what lies behind that. . . ."

Maser ended by kicking the ball through his own goal, conceding after his lecture that the locating in France of Hitler's illegitimate son was "an entirely secondary matter." Haffner was the only one to come to Maser's aid, contending that even this sort of digging into history had its "legitimacy", though he made fun both of Maser and Irving "grubbing after earth-worms."

ALL WERE AGREED, HOWEVER, that the primary problem was the colossal political effects of Hitlerism and that this was what should be investigated and, above all, explained to the young generation. Opinions on this German phenomenon were as diverse as the "Hitler experts" offered to the audience. J. P. Stern—whose witty address on the literary and philosophical roots of National-Socialism was the

Philosophers in Heidelberg . . .

HEIDELBERG'S **"Stadthalle" was overcrowded, packed to the rafters. The "emergency exits" had been pushed open and even more were surging in. It was late, almost nine p.m., when the chairman of the meeting (Professor Michael Theunissen), visibly irritated, finally tried to make a beginning.**

What had happened was that the Rector had refused the meeting (officially sponsored by the Philosophical Seminar) permission to convene on the university grounds. One of the scheduled speakers was Professor Peter Bruckner who had been fined by the Hanover authorities and suspended from his academic post on charges of "terrorist sympathies." The Rector felt that the whole affair was less academic than political, and hence none of the Heidelberg faculty should be allowed to advertise their academic status for the evening. All of this almost left Theunissen high and dry, and indeed the expression on his face was that of a cavalry officer who is forced to continue on the back of a donkey. His rage knew no bounds—he thundered against enemies ("Kohl [the CDU chairman in Bonn] and his academic accomplices"), and he even went so far as to say the differences between the West German *Bundesrepublik* and the East German *DDR* police-state were "disappearing into nothingness." Well, all that he really meant to say was that somebody like Professor Bruckner, suspended from his chair of psychology, could surely make some informed contribution to an evening's discussion of terrorism. In any case he had been invited and he came, as did Hans Friedrich Fulda (Bielefeld) and Albrecht Wellmer (Konstanz) who was constantly identified as "a Habermas student."

Bruckner made the first and longest speech. He went on about the contradiction between Reaction and Revolution in the two centuries since the ancien régime, *and how violence and social criticism both have their sources in intolerable systems of domination, with the unvarying trick of the ruling class being the attempt to smear social criticism with the label of violence and thus suppress it. Metternich and Bismarck behaved pretty much as do present-day rulers. Moreover, inasmuch as bourgeois culture and society is in a corrupt state, it no longer has any legitimate claims to power. The future, according to Bruckner, belongs to the saving vitality of those "life styles" which can be discerned in the movements towards an "alternative culture." Since the bourgeoisie fears such rival social models it can only have recourse to repression; and it is only as a result of such repression—so ran Bruckner's contribution to the "Origins of Terrorism"—that desperate little groups began to form and to indulge in a violence which had more in it of the old order than of the new.*

A REPLY TO ALL THIS **came from Professor Fulda. The Chairman had cast doubts as to whether the post-War German democratic system could be thought of as *"unserem Staat"*, our state; and Fulda went on to defend the post-Hitler social order and to criticise the blind adversary rejection of all existing democratic institutions and liberal forms of authority: they may be abused but that does not undermine their value and principled meaning. He made a distinction between *"Gewalt"* as force which would constitute legitimate use of power, and *"Gewalttätigkeit"* as illegal violence; and he thought it a plausible distinction: the difference, say, between the club of the policeman and the iron rod of a rowdy in a demonstration. The Heidelberg auditorium listened in audible unease.**

Fulda went on to emphasise the importance of an "ethic of responsibility" as the basis for all public political action, and the necessity of calculating all possible consequences. Had the notorious author of the "Buback Obituary"—with its rejection of bloody street murders, but its openly expressed "furtive joy" at the death of Establishment victims—understood what the implications were? With his paean of praise for "joyful militance" could one not justify the **Kristallnacht** *of 1938 when the* **SS** *went about, happily and energetically, destroying Jewish*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

feature of the conference, apart from Syberberg's film—reproached the Germans (the Social-Democrats included) for having lost all sense of the "real value of liberty" even before 1933; Fetscher reminded everybody of the economic background to the rise of Hitler but also, like Haffner, of the hypnotic capabilities of Hitler as a demagogue; Gert Kalow was even prepared to compare Hitler with the terrorist Ulrike Meinhof, saying that both were "honestly" and to the "depths of their being" convinced that they were struggling for the salvation of the world. Finally, all on the platform—since there was no Marxist among them—had to agree with Haffner that Hitler was still "an insoluble riddle."

PRECISELY AT THIS POINT Hans Jürgen Syberberg came forward. All rational explanation having failed, he tried to explain in the irrational language of cinematic art. A patient audience thanked him with applause—some of it from the platform. After Thomas Mann's epic work on the composer Adrian Leverkühn, Syberberg's *Film aus Deutschland* would appear

. . . on the "Origins of Terrorism"

shop windows? The unease in the auditorium became more visible, more audible. When he concluded about the dangerous **Gewaltromantik** *which had seized extreme elements in the German academy ("Mescalero", et al.), he could just about make himself heard.*

WELLMER, WHO HAD BEEN **presented as "a Habermas student", went on to prove his credentials as a supporter of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, professing to grasp the essentials of Terrorism in some way profounder than that of politicians and journalists; but the difference was not discernible. If he had any point it was that Terrorism was not a product of the Left, and that Critical Theory—and its proponents like Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas—had nothing at all to do with it. It could be, and this much he conceded, that some of the first German terrorists of the 1960s and early '70s came out of the Left-wing camp, coloured by socialist phrases and notions from Critical Theory lectures in universities; but between the theory and the practice fell a decisive shadow. For the practice was only "Right-wing politics": and had all the attributes of the "pathology of Capitalism, Imperialism, and Fascism." His conclusion was simple: whoever is a Terrorist cannot be of the Left, and no Socialist would ever go in for terroristic activities. He kept on referring to Hegel as proof of his theses, and the Hegelianism was perhaps his tribute to the academic character of the Philosophical evening; but the audience laughed. They evidently took the classical Brechtian position vis-à-vis Horkheimer's famed Institute for Social Research which worked hard and long to discover answers to problems and crises —but everybody (so Brecht in his "Turandot and the Congress of the Whitewashers") knew who was responsible for all evils, namely, the Capitalist.**

The apologetic and opportunistic character of the argument was obvious. Reference was constantly made to the various "generations" of the German Terrorists, as if this was anything more than a convenient police-file method of classifying the various older and newer groups, from the extinct Baader-Meinhof gang to the active armed cliques responsible for the murders of Judge Drenkman, Federal Prosecutor Buback, Banker Ponto, and Industrialist Schleyer. The "first generation" is supposed to have certain qualities—idealism? ideology? integrity?—and the "second generation" (hit-and-run characters out of the underground), lacking these, are discredited. But surely the question that had to be raised and answered in this context is whether "being theoretical" is a moral quality, indeed such an ethical value that it can justify the extinction of another human life. Murder is what Gudrun Ensslin and Guenther Sonnenberg had in common.

WHICH LEADS DIRECTLY **to the special problem of men and women in the Movement, for this obviously has a "Left-wing" aspect. Were there more women than men involved in the various German terrorist gangs? If so, does this prove that theory and ideology had nothing to do with the degeneration? For Wellmer the "ladies on the barricades" were all females of the upper-middle classes who were having their special difficulties with "Emancipation." But, as a matter of hard fact, the number of female terrorists is in the same proportion as the number of women students in German universities. Since the campuses are the recruiting-grounds for terrorism, it would be very strange if women didn't turn up in the underground as often as men. Once again a philosophical apologia was made up on the basis of very little in the way of real facts, and here too one was forced to think of three generations of "whitewashing", followers of the followers of the followers of Critical Theory, or from Horkheimer-to-Habermas-to-Wellmer. . . .**

WAS THIS *a discussion on the "Origins of Terrorism"? Bruckner had neither the head, the knowledge, or the will for it; Wellmer had little critical openness and less courage; Fulda hardly had the opportunity to state a few hard truths about the nature of politics and the personal elements of a responsible idealism. At the end of it all the most that one could say is that the evening came off better than would ever have been possible only a few short years ago before such an audience in Heidelberg.*

J.B. in the FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to be the second great artistic transformation of the terrible Nazi past, a Doktor Faustus in celluloid. What was once a *Reich* of frenzied dreams he has transposed into film, encoding it in fairy-tales and riddles, knights-in-armour and nightmares. For those who still have the noise of that era ringing in their ears, the film's seven hours are, so to speak, a catharsis. As one German reviewer wrote, "Something deep in us all was the target of an uncanny job of demolition. . . ."

The Aschaffenburg authorities (by undertaking to pay half the film-copying costs) had persuaded Syberberg to confine the première to an invited audience. Blond, blue-eyed, sporting a shirt with Byronic collar, he made himself available for an evening-long discussion, showing endless forbearance in the face of his critics' protests, some of them very sharp indeed. He had to take all sorts of accusations: that he was a man of the German right wing, that he was actually promoting a revival of Teutonic nationalist dreams, that he was guilty of an affront to rational thought, that he represented a kind of fascist aesthetics. Respectful though they tried to be, the scholars were not sparing with criticism. But the historians' *Beckmesserei* appeared to make as little impression on Syberberg's film as they might have on Shakespeare's royal dramas.

What distinguishes Syberberg's work of art from, say, Joachim Fest's Hitler film documentary? It concentrates on the *moral* aspect throughout; it revolves not around Hitler but around crime, the murder of Jews—and circles around us, haunted by guilt unto the third and fourth generation. "*Wir, zwischen Jesus und Hitler*" are the words at one point. In one of the most breathtaking scenes Himmler, talking to his *masseur*, is tormented by pictures of his black-shirted minions of murder. The scene also included quotations from original documents and statements by eye-witnesses. Were these trivial "details"? How could Syberberg eliminate the horror of it all? how can one "reconstruct Auschwitz"?

One of the charges against him he accepted without a murmur: that his film was "esoteric", that it was designed for people "who read books, go to the theatre, listen to records." He appears not to be concerned with the others—with, say, the youthful 50% of Germans who are in school and university. For him Hitler is a subject for intellectuals, since the workers have now been immunised by "never having it so good. . . ." Yet in the midst of the racket outside the *Hofgarten* cinema (sub-machine guns, TV cameras) stood a totally unimportant character, bushy-bearded in leather jacket and little Bavarian hat, and I overheard his conversation: "If I was to say something about Hitler I'd say this: if there was an election now, then 50% would vote for him . . . ."

Snail Thrush

You fell from heaven.
A spotted waistcoat,
long legs,
bright eyes.

Your knock was stony.
You broke, entered,
scooped,
ate me whole.

Chips of my armour
strew the concrete;
light as your next
footfall.

Geoffrey Holloway

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DISCUSSION

Can Europe Really be Defended?

By Helmut Sonnenfeldt

GEORGE QUESTER (ENCOUNTER, September) paints a relatively rosy picture of the prospects for Western defence in Central Europe. Briefly, he believes that non-nuclear technologies now becoming increasingly available for anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons can go a long way in nullifying (or at least offsetting) the Warsaw Pact build-up of recent years in armoured vehicles, aircraft and manpower. Quester's underlying argument is that it is basically desirable to strengthen the defensive side of military capabilities, and that the new technologies have this general effect. When the defence "dominates", the result (he feels) is to make all-out conventional attack, and hence War, less likely. Limited Soviet land-grabs would still be a danger and, at least pending introduction of more local militia-like forces, will be most effectively deterred by the political and economic costs that would ensue. But even these contingencies would become less likely as deterrence of a large invasion becomes more effective. Quester concludes, *inter alia*, that the "Neutron Bomb" could well be made redundant by the new anti-tank warfare technologies, thus avoiding deployment of a system which might blur the distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons. Generally, if the opportunities for non-nuclear defence, and hence deterrence, are fully explored, the threat of nuclear escalation could decline considerably in importance, and numerical comparisons of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces may become less frightening and less significant.

The Quester thesis is not new, but he has presented one of the more sustained arguments to appear in public print for a more optimistic view of the emerging military balance in Europe. His general case for strengthening security by strengthening the Defence (rather than the Offence) is, I believe, sound. It may be recalled in this regard that, whatever the complexities that have appeared in the meantime, the original Western approach to the MBFR negotiations in the 1970s was to devise proposals which, if implemented, would reduce the likelihood of surprise and reduce the effectiveness of offensive as against defensive military capabilities.

Quester recognises that the distinction between Offence and Defence is not necessarily clear-cut, although, in my view, he does not deal with the problem in adequate depth. Thus, the side suffering aggression (i.e. NATO), may nevertheless become the attacker when *counter*-attacks are launched against advancing or exposed enemy forces, and efforts are made to retake lost territory. One needs to examine more fully how new technologies, on both sides, would affect this stage of the battle. Quester tends to minimise or even beg the issue by arguing that such contingencies may not arise at all because the original attack can be more easily blunted by use of new anti-tank missiles and precision-guided munitions and so may be precluded from occurring in the first place.

Quester also notes the effectiveness of new surface-to-air missiles against aircraft. There should have been more analysis of the impact on the effectiveness of aircraft of new types of air-to-surface missiles and of other means of penetration. He also pays little or no attention to problems of command and control in contemporary and future conventional warfare in Europe.

IN GENERAL, HIS ANALYSIS gives greatest weight to the introduction of new technologies in NATO forces and attempts no net assessment of the evolving impact of such technologies on the forces of both sides. (As I write these comments, the US press reports experiments with laser beams against anti-tank missiles.)

I raise these matters not because I have a fundamental quarrel with the case for a strong, modern, non-nuclear defence in Europe. On the contrary, I welcome the extent to which the introduction of new technologies and other actions being undertaken to improve NATO forces and their readiness are increasing the chances of effective initial defence. I raise them because I would like to see Quester's case made even more convincing, and because discussions

DR HELMUT SONNENFELDT *was a senior US State Department adviser during the Henry Kissinger period, and is now on the faculty at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. The article by George Quester, based on an "Aspen Institute Workshop" (Chairman: Professor Adam Yarmolinsky), was published in the September* ENCOUNTER.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

such as these should help us identify the directions along which more study and greater effort may be required.

In particular, I find Quester's case against the "Neutron Bomb" (actually artillery shells) dubious. I do not believe the weapon was intended to be the sole or even principal means of anti-tank warfare. It was judged, on balance, to be an effective addition to such means—and hence an addition to Deterrence. I am not aware that procedures and doctrines for using this particular weapon, as distinct from other theatre nuclear weapons in process of modernisation, would reduce the "firebreak" between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons. For an aggressor to know that it is available to the other side would, I believe, add to stability. The inflamed public discussion and political mishandling of the issue earlier this year obscured these points.

More generally, while some of the technologies now becoming available or in prospect will permit the use of "conventional" (i.e. non-nuclear) munitions where nuclear weapons were hitherto considered more effective or necessary, this does *not* spell the end of the need for nuclear defence.

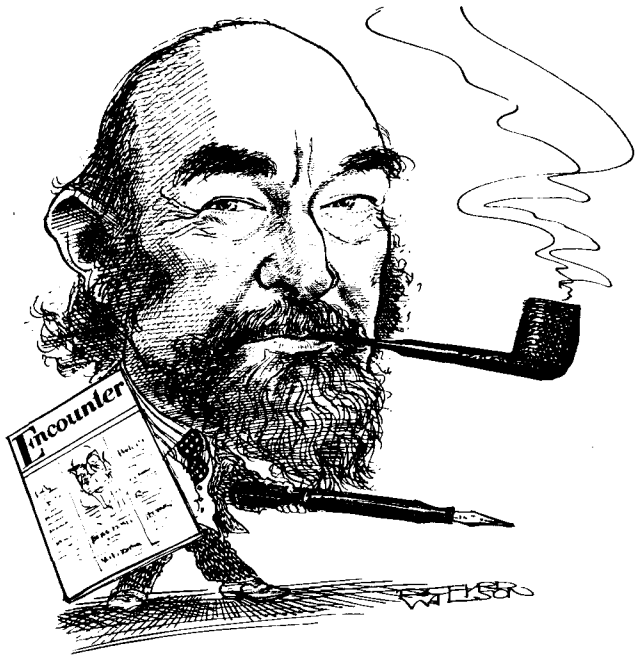
FURTHERMORE, BEFORE WE become too conclusive in anticipating prospective "stability" we need to take fuller measure of what the Soviets would or might do to offset—in their turn—the improvements in defensive capabilities being introduced in the West. The Soviets have made (and continue to make) massive investments in their forces in Europe, not only in tanks but in a whole array of equipment.

I think Quester's assessment of the possible motivations for the build-up, particularly of armoured vehicles—essentially "inertia", and (in his view, more plausible) the need to keep Eastern Europe under control—is perhaps too simple. The fact is, that in recent years, the Soviet build-up has not only increased and improved the Warsaw Pact's general capacity for attack, but has tended to reduce the warning-time NATO could expect to have before an attack is launched. It is unlikely that this would be entirely the product of "inertia" or of Soviet security concerns about Eastern Europe. Even if they harboured no specific intention to attack, the *offensive* potential of their forces—as well as the possibilities that this potential may have intimidating effects in the West—will hardly have escaped the Soviet leaders who make the decisions to allocate the costly resources involved. Thus it is at least not self-evident that the Soviets would stand idly by while the effects of their exertions are eroded or nullified.

AGAIN, I MUST REPEAT, these observations are not intended to detract from the basic proposition, but to reinforce it. The West is right to use its technological and other assets to redress the balance. It is right to take actions that make successful attack from a standing start, or with little warning, less likely and feasible. It is right to take steps that may help to make the most offensive elements in the Soviet forces "wasting assets." It is right to improve Western capabilities for non-nuclear defence in the first instance, though it must take care to avoid the pitfalls of "decoupling" it from nuclear defence. There is no question that "the most credible defence" is also "the most credible deterrent." I agree that there has been some salutary progress. More is needed, including efforts to make Allied forces technically more compatible with each other. And if it turns out that the projected 3% annual increase in real Defence spending which NATO countries have agreed upon for the coming years is inadequate, that figure may have to be reconsidered.

In any event, whether or not one shares all of George Quester's hopes, there is reason to view the security of the future in Europe with some sober confidence—if we use our assets correctly and recognise that as long as the Soviets are committed to amassing military power of all kinds (incidentally, largely irrespective of fluctuations in Western military programmes) we cannot relax.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Melvin J. Lasky

Utopia & Revolution

(Now available in an American Paperback)

"A remarkable achievement, covering five centuries of Western ideas, symbols and metaphors—all brought, sometimes dazzlingly, within the revolutionary fold. . . . It is a book large in size and import. . . . Although the style is generally lucid, sometimes brilliant and evocative, Lasky has a penchant for racing back and forth in time, for zigging and zagging down a broken field of ideas and their creators. . . . It is as though he had taken a Tolstoy or Dostoyevsky novel as his model for constructing a history. . . . It is indubitably an original—in its location of important, heretofore obscure minds, in its skilful handling of a very large body of texts, and in its fresh interpretations. . . . There is also in his book the quality the French call *passion*." **Robert Nisbet,** *New York Times Book Review*

"I guarantee that anybody with the slightest interest in the way the world we live in is organised, or disorganised, will find much to amaze, to enlighten, even to amuse in this astounding stew of western humanity's hopes and fears, dreams and nightmares, deceit and delusion. . . . He exuberantly pours them out for us, like an ideological John Aubrey, in a swirling kaleidoscope of contradictions. . . . I am sorry that Mr Lasky has felt obliged to apologise for the very qualities which make his tumultuous, demanding, but never difficult book so invigorating: its wealth of quotation, its character sketches and its occasional anecdotes; and, one might add, the absence of cant and jargon. . . ." **J. W. Lambert,** *Sunday Times*

"Every decade or so a book appears to rouse the sluggish world of intellect. . . . Now Melvin Lasky, editor of *Encounter* in London, in a monumental survey asks us to rethink the relationship between ideas, ideals, and ideologies. . . . A rare intellectual pleasure, eminently readable, a compelling book." **F. S. Manor,** *The Alternative/American Spectator*

"Mr Lasky's magnum opus may turn out to be, both as symbol and source book, one of the most influential for years past. It won't be widely read . . . but it will be one of those which people think they have read when they haven't (compare *Das Kapital*, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *The Golden Bough*). Its message, probably garbled, will percolate through to commentators and political scientists on the campus. It will be misrepresented, and will have effects Mr Lasky didn't even imagine. But then he is a reflective and experienced man, and part of his message is that nearly all human utterances and plans have effects that those making them never did imagine. . . . Lasky's work is perhaps the wisest and most balanced plank in . . . the middle ground of Western political thinking." **C. P. Snow,** *Financial Times*

University of Chicago Press
Cloth — $35.00 Paper — $10.95

Macmillan London
Cloth — £15

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE VERANDA *of Room 52, on the second floor of the Clinique Générale, looks out over a Geneva garden: an ancient holm-oak stands imposingly on the lawn, with its occasional beds of fiery begonias. In the background rises the deep green wall of fir-trees, still in the crystalline air, with its diving swallows.*

He is wearing a red dressing-gown and lying in an armchair, quiet, meditative, steeped in a sunny southern haze. His face is tired, and the line of his mouth, which an ash-grey moustache cannot hide, seems more bitter than it ever was: he shows his almost eighty years quite clearly. He has been in the Swiss nursing home for some five months now and thinks of staying on there for the whole of August. Here, he murmurs, the water of the lake and the snows of Mont Blanc carry spring right on through the summer. He speaks with difficulty.

Even before his illness his voice was always rather low and almost colourless; now it seems like a sigh. You have to lip-read, rather than listen. In this weariness, in this renunciation of the voice (only partly, I suspect, due to his long convalescence) there is a deep modesty, the ironic scepticism of a man who is now cut off from everyday reality, persuaded of the uselessness of gesture, of social ritual. He smiles at the Latin American nurse who has brought him a glass of medicine; even his glance seems absent, and becomes expressive only when I throw into the silence names and topics that he cares about.

"YESTERDAY", he breathes, "the telephone rang." "Yes", I say, dragging it out of him word by word, "the telephone rang . . .?" In a murmur he goes on: "A voice said: 'This is Sandro.' I said: 'Sandro who?' He said: 'Sandro Pertini.' " He shook his head to emphasise the pleasure and surprise of the telephone call. Then, in a clearer murmur, he goes on: "I didn't realise right away who it was. I wasn't thinking of him or expecting him." I say that Pertini, the newly elected President of Italy, ash always been nice to his old friends.

He smiles at a distant memory. "We both joined the Socialist Party together. Then I went another way. He's a very likeable man, and we often used to meet after the War." He moves his lips in silent speech, then says slowly: "He's older than me, but healthy. He could do a lot and do it well." Then, after a pause: "There's the important matter of the balance of political forces. . . ."

I ASK HIM *what he thinks of the "Historic Compromise." "***Non ci credo***, I don't believe in it", he replies. "I have a certain respect for Berlinguer and others in his party, but I don't believe in it, honestly I don't. All the same, you never can tell where a party may be going. . . ." I go back to Pertini's telephone call, which moved him so much. "He wanted to ask about my health", he says, "but we spoke of other things too." I don't tell him—in order to avoid worrying him—that some days ago, when he was receiving some journalists at the Quirinale, the President of the Republic heard from one of them (Vittorio Gorresio mentioned it in "La Stampa") of Silone's long convalescence in Geneva, "after very unfortunate efforts to treat him in Italy"; and he was very upset at the thought of him (as the journalists reported) alone, neglected, lonely and unprotected; although in fact he appears to be well looked after by his publisher.*

Jokingly, and in order to cut across his modesty, I suggest that Pertini might nominate him for the Senate. A short burst of laughter punctuated by coughing, and he waves his hand, annoyed. Then he murmurs: "Pointless, quite pointless, no use at all. And I'm no good for anything. The only thing I care about is finishing my novel. . . ." He gets up and from the bedside table, where they have already left his lunch in covered dishes, picks up a file of manuscript and reads me the title on the front: "La speranza di suor Severina" (The Hope of Sister Severina). Then, sitting down again, he goes on: "It's finished, really. I've even revised it. But as always I'm not satisfied with the way it's turned out, and when I re-read it I have doubts. . . ."

I ask him about its subject and setting. Reluctantly he says it takes place in Abruzzo and won't be very long: a little over a hundred pages. "The subject is religious", he says. "At least it is at first, up to a point. Then the main character takes a different attitude, because of a priest, and ends by making a mistake, committing an error. . . ."

HE PREFERS **to say no more. It is I who tell him that, strangely enough—perhaps it is a sign of the times: a religious theme occurs in the "work in progress" of more than one Italian novelist. "In my books it has always been there", he says. "I am glad others—**

THIS INTERVIEW *was conducted by* DOMENICO PORZIO *of La Stampa shortly before Silone died, at the age of 78, in Geneva on 20 August. A memorable greeting to him by François Bondy on the occasion of his 75th birthday was published in* ENCOUNTER *(August 1975). He had been one of our closest friends and collaborators for decades, especially during the years when he and Nicola Chiaromonte edited "Tempo Presente", that most distinguished of post-War Italian periodicals. Silone's last article in* ENCOUNTER, *"What Remains: A Word about Socialism and Christianity", appeared in December 1968. His novels will not be forgotten, nor at least three of his most persuasive political essays: "The School for Dictators" (1937); the memoir he contributed to Richard Crossman's influential collection, "The God That Failed" (1950); and his mature reflections and reconsiderations which we were proud to publish in these pages (March, April 1968), "Re-thinking Progress."* M.J.L.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

...A Last Visit

younger writers—are turning to it too. But writers aren't made by their subjects." As if forestalling a question from me, he goes on: "These recurrent interests may mean nothing: they are neither a good sign, nor a bad one."

I TAKE UP *the thread of his talk again. "Are you homesick for your Abruzzo, for your Marsica?" He shakes his head very definitely. "My Abruzzo can be anywhere." "But", I ask, "wouldn't you go back and live there?" "No, I wouldn't go back. A place is made by the people who live there. Those who lived in and made my Abruzzo no longer exist. Even there, because of politics, everything has changed for the worse." I look surprised. "It's well known", he says. "Everyone knows that politics spoils things." I retort that having devoted so many years to politics doesn't seem to have spoiled him.*

He is silent for a long time, as if to get his second wind. "First of all, I'm not an argument that supports my thesis, and then again I've never taken on the everyday theatre of politics." His meal has now been on the table for some time, and I remark that perhaps I should say goodbye and leave him; but Silone protests and asks me to stay. "I can take it or leave it, now, as far as eating's concerned." I promise I will return in the afternoon and bring him a bottle of wine, as he appears to have finished his.

IN A TAXI I cross the old town, the proud, ancient village of Calvin and Rousseau; beyond the Pont Mont-Blanc, with its enormous fountain playing beside it, I drive along the Quai where the anarchist Lucini assassinated the Empress Elizabeth of Austria at the end of the last century; and I wonder what links Silone, from Abruzzo, to this little land beyond the Alps where fate led him at the most critical time of his life. He spent many years of his anti-fascist political exile in Zurich, and in 1930 published *Fontamara*, his first successful novel, there.

In the afternoon I went back to the nursing home with a bottle of Médoc. Silone is tieing his shoelaces for the walk we have agreed to take in the garden; he smiles when I say I will telephone him from Milan to ask if the wine's year happened to be a good one.

The garden is empty. The crystalline air has dimmed a little in the hot hours of the day, but there is no sultriness in the shelter of the high hedge where we sit down. From the outside and from the garden, the architecture of the nursing home with its two storeys, its verandas and wooden arches, its roof with heavily jutting eaves and its pinnacles on the chimneys, has an unfashionable air, and looks quite unlike a clinic. "It looks just like a building in Russia", Silone remarks, his voice slightly less weak, less murmuring.

I gossip to him about the city down by the lake where they are getting ready for the coming "fêtes de Genève"; about fireworks and the European finals of the drum-majorettes; of the Rousseau monument which the people of Geneva placed on the small island in the Rhône, invisible among the trees. He says he has not read much of Rousseau and never really liked him. I remind him that Rousseau was a man who did not mind displeasing the authorities, and wanted to state his own truth; today he might be called a dissident intellectual. . . .

HAD SILONE followed the whole discussion on this very subject last year, in which many Italians took part? A discussion on the courage and cowardice of intellectuals, and I summarised what the most polemical participants had argued: Amendola, Sciascia, Calvino. . . . "I didn't follow it", he says, "and it all seems to me a bit pointless. I don't think I've ever had physical courage, but I wouldn't have refused to do jury service in the trial of the Red Brigades. Even among intellectuals there may be a few with great physical courage. Pertini has it, for example—I wouldn't have done what he's done."

After a pause he goes on: "Sciascia is an honest man: he started off as a communist, then had the courage to stop being one."

About Solzhenitsyn and his recent speech at Harvard, in which he accused the West of being totally without spiritual strength, he says: "I have a high opinion of him, even though I don't agree with all his theories. But it's not true that spiritual strength today belongs only to the Russian people."

CASUALLY, *and with intervals of silence throughout, he mentions his youth, and the time in which, in his early twenties, he took part in the foundation of the Italian Communist Party, as the representative of the young socialists; and of his work as a journalist on "l'Avanguardia", in Rome. I ask him why he chose the name Ignazio Silone as a pseudonym (he was born as Secondo Tranquilli, in the Abruzzi, on 1 May 1900). "I wanted a name I didn't find attractive", he replies. "I felt greatly disgusted with the literary atmosphere at the time. 'Silone' meant nothing. It was only later that someone discovered it was an ancient name, belonging to a man from Marsica, like me, who had fought against the Roman legions. It would have seemed to me ridiculous to have a fine D'Annunzian name ('un bel nome dannunziano'). . . ."*

He gazes absorbedly at the flowers on the lawn and at a bee visiting them, one after the other. Finally, almost as if he were concluding all his thoughts, he says: "Nothing matters to me any more now, I don't even mind dying. I've seen enough, and perhaps done enough. . . ." I ask him if he believes in an after-life. He doesn't. "I've always been a Christian", he says, "but in my own way. And I never wanted to be a Catholic. It's odd", he goes on, "how many people tried to find Catholic meanings in my book on Pope Celestine, but there aren't any. Yes, there's the Gospel, but that's quite another matter. . . ."

THE SETTING SUN throws the long shadow of the hedge across our chairs. I suggest it is time for him to go back to his room. He walks upright, slowly, surely. He murmurs to me: "You can, after all, believe in God without believing in an after-life. . . ."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Kennan's Warning

GEORGE KENNAN'S "A Last Warning" in the July issue contains all the evidence one needs that his is the weaker side of the debate, even without a reading of Messrs Pipes and Labedz. He begins, "I am reluctant to enter into polemics. . . ." But why? Is the topic insufficiently important to engage his interest? Has he been the target of personal abuse? Here as elsewhere in his reply he strikes the Horatian pose: weary of the world's folly and wickedness, he has retired to his country estate to meditate and refresh himself, only to be summoned back to the hurly-burly of worldly affairs by the importunings of busy fools.

He asks for "the privilege of making my own judgments" on various Soviet activities, as if anyone were trying to deprive him of that right (it is not a privilege), quite forgetting that what has occasioned the debate in which he is so reluctantly taking part is his own attempt to influence us to see things his way. Nothing wrong with that—he has performed a service by publishing his views—but he really must not react like a rebuffed suitor when others contest those views. He rejects the notion that an atomic conflict is winnable by anyone. He may be right, but he is missing the point that others have been trying to make: the Soviets appear to believe that such a conflict could be won, and their belief, whether right or wrong, is itself a fact of great significance.

KENNAN TELLS US that all he meant in calling Brezhnev a man of peace is that the Soviet leader is reluctant to become embroiled in a major war with a major power—and that this meaning should have been clear to everyone. But for most readers, I think, the label "man of peace" implies more than a prudent desire not to fight someone your own size. He tells us that not since 1945 has the Soviet Union sent its forces "abroad" for combat. If he is using that word in its peculiarly American sense of "overseas" he may be right, but I trust he is not hiding behind so special a usage; in the ordinary sense, I think Czechoslovakia qualifies as "abroad."

Mr Kennan points out that America does many of the things we deplore when the Soviet Union does them, and that world opinion is not likely to support our implicit claim to superior virtue. Here he writes not from the Sabine farm but from Olympus, from whose peak little difference can be seen between mortals. We in the West are fighting for a set of values, and for the survival of a society that tries, with imperfect success, to embody those values. We believe we are right to take certain actions that displease the Soviet Union, while attempting to deny them the ability to do similar things to us. We are not neutral as between ourselves and our adversary, and if world opinion sees no justification for our preference, it will not be the first time that that very easily misled and distracted sheep went astray.

FINALLY, in almost his last words, Mr Kennan warns us against a return to the Cold War, brinkmanship, and the spirit of Dulles. Is not the period characterised by these terms the very one of which he was speaking when he said, with some complacency, "we have, after all, contrived to muddle along with each other, without war, for several decades"?

MARK HALPERN

Palo Alto
California

Can Politics be Untheatrical?

MY THANKS to Roger Sandall for the nod to me in his discussion of theatrical politics (ENCOUNTER, August). But I must point out that he has misunderstood the tenor of my own piece on the same subject (June 1978).

I did not primarily concern myself with the *deliberate* muddling of theatre and real life. Indeed, I stressed that such a conspiracy theory was to be avoided, and suggested that the muddle was probably an unavoidable fact of political and journalistic life in today's conditions.

Curiously enough, a facet of my discussion was anticipated by Adam Smith in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, first published in 1759:

> "The leaders of the discontented party seldom fail to hold out some plausible plan of reformation which, they pretend, will not only remove the inconveniencies and relieve the distresses immediately complained of, but will prevent, in all time coming, any return of the like inconveniencies and distresses. . . . The great body of the party are commonly intoxicated with the imaginary beauty of this ideal system, of which they have no experience, but which has been presented to them in all the most dazzling colours in which the eloquence of their leaders could paint it. *Those leaders themselves* . . . become many of them in time the dupes of their own sophistry, and are as eager for this great reformation as the weakest and foolishest of their followers" [italics added].

The uncanny aptness of that passage to present-day British politics will escape no one who is familiar with the careers of (for example) Michael Foot and Tony Wedgwood Benn.

The major slip in Roger Sandall's discussion seems to me to be his implicit dismissal of the value of ritual in protecting human society from what he calls ontological terror. Such a dismissal appears to fly in the face of a great deal of evidence in Mr Sandall's own field (Anthropology), particularly where our own society is concerned, and may be rooted in a common academic error—the assumption that "irrational" and "false" are, so to speak synonyms. Sometimes, but sometimes not. The case is not quite as straightforward as Mr Sandall seems to think. I agree that the writers dissected by Mr Sandall wander down some bizarre and often idiotic intellectual lanes. But these are not the first—nor, probably, the last—cases of legitimate insights being silted into muddy nonsense. It is still possible to condemn the nonsense while allowing the insight to rise to the top; and I think Mr Sandall failed to do that.

London HERB GREER

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ROGER SANDALL'S criticisms of *The Theatre of Politics* [ENCOUNTER, August] do raise serious questions. As my book hesitantly admits, the metaphor (if it is a metaphor) of Politics as Theatre is not entirely satisfactory and it does pull in different directions. Yet the difficulties of making the Theatre/Politics connection do not entitle Mr Sandall to rope me in with such a grisly crew, and I hastily second his diatribe against the sociology of knowledge and the unthinking relativism of some anthropologists.

None of this, however, nor Mr Herb Greer's attack on the sensationalism of the press and television today (ENCOUNTER, June) really helps to answer the main question posed by the Theatre/Politics connection: How is the politician to deal with the inescapably theatrical aspect of his profession? To ask this question is *not* to say that politics is all theatre, nor that the theatre is all sham or illusion or deception, nor that one successful theatrical effect is as good as another. Theatre audiences may applaud Mr Alec McCowen delivering the Gospel According to St Mark just as loudly as they applaud *Oh Calcutta!*. This does not imply that the two experiences are on the same level. Similarly, to point out that both the Gettysburg Address and the ultimata of the Baader-Meinhof Gang may have a theatrical aspect does not mean that there is nothing much to choose between them.

MY PREMISE IS simply that a successful political utterance (that is, an utterance which helps to produce the result desired by the politician—action, votes, a change of heart) must *to some extent* be influenced by the preconceptions of its audience and by the circumstances of its delivery in a way in which a successful scientific theory is not and must not be influenced. To this extent, it is theatrical and it is part of a conversation or a dialogue. For there are two parties involved. Theatre audiences do answer back: they laugh, gasp, cheer, sob, boo, walk out, return to the same show—responses which occur in political audiences too and which inevitably influence the future actions of theatrical producers and political managers alike. The proscenium arch does impose a certain detachment, but so, as I have tried to show, does the distancing effect of the processes of representative government. That distance has to be abridged; it is part of the representative's duty both to listen to and to make himself understood by his electors, whether sitting in the front row or in the cheaper seats in the gallery.

These observable facts present anyone engaged in the business of public persuasion with continuing moral and intellectual difficulties which crystallise into those habits of speech and action which we identify as typically political. You may deride these habits, or you may sympathise with the real dilemmas which they represent and with the honest politician's efforts to reconcile personal integrity with political effectiveness. But to imagine that the dilemmas are unreal and that any trace of theatricality is merely a sign of a shoddy or corrupt politician seems to me to betray an incomplete understanding of political life and of the consuming demands it makes.

FERDINAND MOUNT

London

Nuremberg & "Documentary Over-kill"

Some Critical Remarks—By BRADLEY F. SMITH

PROFESSOR DONALD WATT'S discussion piece, "Nuremberg Revisited" [ENCOUNTER, May], was interesting and, for the most part, accurately summarised the points I advanced in *Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg*. Three, not two, organisations were declared criminal by the Tribunal (SS, Gestapo/SD, and the Leadership Corp of the Nazi Party); and Professor Watt errs when he states that I prophesied the end of purge trials. All I did was ask: "who in subsequent years will want to set up this kind of elaborate system in order to collect a dozen death sentences?" (p. 304). The point being that Nuremberg, in my opinion, revealed a myriad of reasons why one cannot organise a single proceeding that will effectively purge a nation and at the same time show much due process.

But more important than these items are two statements near the end of Professor Watt's article, with which, if I understand him correctly, I must register disagreement. Professor Watt seems to be saying that by bringing forth the documentary records of the evils of Nazism, Nuremberg banished "the authoritarian tradition" from Europe "for at least a generation." Since the last three decades have seen phenomena like the Franco régime, this assertion seems highly implausible; but I do not wish to labour the point. Professor Watt's observation that "Nuremberg killed Nazism dead" seems equally overstated, however, and it is much more closely related to the subject at hand. To my mind, Professor Watt gives the trial far too much credit. Nazism's own atrocities, and its catastrophic defeat, were what laid it in the tomb. The significant question is, did the Nuremberg trial help to keep it there?

On one basic aspect of the problem, Professor Watt and I agree, because Nuremberg surely did initiate the process of preserving Nazi records; and these documents are the most important assets historians have in dealing with neo-Nazi mythologists. It is worth noting, though, that it was because the prosecution charged the defendants with participation in a conspiracy, and also attempted to have six organisations declared criminal—surely two of the more questionable aspects of the proceedings—that so many documents were preserved. Once the net was cast so widely, nearly every Nazi document became potentially important to the Allied case; and the prosecutors were forced into the business of wholesale record preservation.

BUT NOT ALL the blemishes in the Nuremberg proceed-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ings produced such happy consequences. Some testimony was slanted, documents were torn out of context, and procedural irregularities did occur. Enough of these took place so that a man like Werner Maser, who (as Professor Watt says) "finds it difficult to evade suspicion of holding a sneaking sympathy for the less criminal aspects of Hitler's Germany", managed to parlay them into a volume that reached *Der Spiegel's* bestseller list.

Perhaps even more important, Nuremberg's mental set, emphasising conspiracy and a slavish dependence on massive documentation, has itself produced confusion and controversy among historians. Professor Watt decries the "unbalanced excitement" that accompanied the appearance of A. J. P. Taylor's *The Origins of the Second World War*. But that volume was in part so disturbing to traditional historians because it challenged the contention that diplomacy in the 1930s could be treated *à la* Nuremberg as if it were an unfolding conspiracy. Even the reverberations from David Irving's *Hitler's War* (another phenomenon deplored by Professor Watt) arose indirectly from the attitude toward historical documentation created by the trial. As a child of the Nuremberg era of Documentary Overkill, David Irving implies that we should have a *specific* document to prove *everything* about the past which is worth knowing. Since no single extant document establishes that Hitler directly ordered the extermination of Jews, Irving thinks it is proper to conclude that the *Fuhrer* was not responsible. For no other period of history could one advance such a nonsensical notion of "negative evidence" and hope to have it taken seriously. Yet that too is part of the Nuremberg legacy.

So even though I share Professor Watt's belief that Nuremberg was very beneficial to historians of the Third Reich, the Trial—like everything even remotely associated with Nazism—also had its negative aspects. While historians are counting their documentary blessings, it is important that they recognise that they have fallen heir to some dark features, as well as to those of light.

BRADLEY F. SMITH

Cabrillo College
Aptos, California

Polysyllabic Derogation

THERE IS AN INSTITUTION *called AIM, which stands for "Accuracy in Media," whose mission in life is to monitor the principal journals in search of factual bias. Reed Irvine is in the tradition of those who never give up. This requires, as we shall see, iron-plated skin.*

AIM's Irvine wanted to know why The Washington Post is always going on about the human rights violations in Chile and South Africa but is parsimonious in its recording of human rights violations in Cuba and Cambodia. Indeed, if AIM's contentions are correct, and in the acrimonious exchange they are not in fact challenged, the readers of The Washington Post have scant reason to know that Cambodia is being governed by anyone meaner than Pericles.

Reed Irvine tracked down a particular episode involving a press conference of a Cambodian escapee, Pin Yathay, whose story was not carried by the Post. The responsibility was that of the news editor, who gave as his reason that it was so similar to other stories the Post had carried. "We pointed out," writes Mr Irvine in his newsletter, "that those other stories simply could not be found in the pages of the Post in the preceding year. We suggested that Mrs Katharine Graham ought to try to find out the real reason . . . We noted a pattern of reporting at the Post that could reflect the ideological proclivities of some of its personnel."

Graham reacted by accusing Irvine of "character assassination" and comparing him to Joe McCarthy. "Mr Bradlee," Irvine writes stoically, "was somewhat less temperate." Bradlee wrote "you have revealed yourself as a miserable, carping retromingent vigilante, and I for one am sick of wasting my time in communication with you."

I PAUSE TO LOOK LOVINGLY, *but a little suspiciously, at* retromingent, *a word which is a sure enough "out-of-town word." If you approach the word in the spirit of a crossword puzzle it is kind of fun.* Retro, *as in retrogress, means to move backward.*

It is a coincidence that I once wrote a novel in which my character, as a schoolboy, got into trouble with his Latin teacher by scrawling on the blackboard, under a caricature of his teacher performing the very act, "mingo mingere minxi minctus." *which are the principal parts of the Latin verb "to urinate." Thus is Mr Irvine, in the high pitch of the editor's wrath, accused of urinating backward.*

The trouble with all this verbal commotion is that it isn't immediately clear how this is biologically possible, and not at all clear why it is disparaging.

DICTIONARIES *here are particularly unhelpful as witness the citation in Oxford:*

> **"1817** Keatinge: 'The nobler animals, the lion, the elephant, are retromingent."

In that exchange, Mr Irvine with his "Mr Bradlee was somewhat less temperate" emerges as the winner. Sweet are the uses of meiosis.

WHAT SHOULD AN EDITOR DO, *when asked by a reader to explain an apparent factual bias? Mr Irvine's experiences with the publisher of The New York Times, Mr Sulzberger, have proved happier. Mr Sulzberger directs that queries should be sent to the reporter who, if he has not answered them within 10 days, can expect to see the complaint published in the Letters section. Poor Reed Irvine, when he wants space in The Washington Post, has to pay for it, as advertising, thereby making it possible to buy bigger and better dictionaries for the editor.*

William F. Buckley
In the ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS
(Denver, Colorado)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

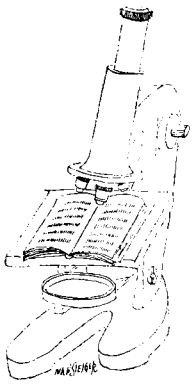
The Nuremberg Trials

NOT EVEN Professor D. C. Watt ("Nuremberg Reconsidered", ENCOUNTER, May), let alone Dr F. W. Kempner ("Letters", August), puts his finger on one point which by itself totally invalidates the Nuremberg trial as a judicial process: the presence on the bench of a Soviet "judge."

(*1*) He was the notorious I. I. Nikitchenko, who had previously been in the public eye as one of the judges in the Zinoviev Trial of 1936. Even then there was very strong suspicion, to put it no higher, that that trial was a total fake and that the judges were knowing accomplices in judicial murder. And, in

Vogue Word Watch

New York City



Clearly (*a term that has replaced* **obviously**, *which long ago replaced* **manifestly**) *anyone who has not been* **tracking** (*term that has replaced* **monitoring**, *which long ago replaced* **following**) *fashionable lingo is in* **big trouble.**

Basically (*which has replaced* **I mean, uh**, *and is akin to the British throat-clearing* **actually**), *the great slang spawning grounds of the past—the music and drug-culture worlds—have failed us in the last year, popularizing merely* **punk** (*a stylish* **kitsch**) *and* **angel dust** (*a toxic hallucinogen first used to sedate primates*). *Instead, the new fountains of argot are the media, kid's talk, diplomacy and sports.*

KID'S TALK, *spread by television, has not been delinquent in coinages.* **Cool**, *that product of the 40's, continues unabated, but* **dynamite** *as an adjective has fizzled, as have* **beautiful** *and* **terrific**; *the new word for excellence is, unbelievably,* **excellent.**

The summarized continuation, or indication of a continued series, has long been a staple of kid's talk: **Etcetera etcetera** *was followed by* **blah-blah-blah,** *and more recently by* **and all that stuff** *or* **and like that**; *the current locution is* **y'know what I'm saying.** *An old slang term,* **narc,** *has been revived for* **tattletale,** *and* **suave** *kids enter the room with* **"What's the rave?"**

DIPLOMACY, *which not long ago brought us* **step-by-step** *and the unpronounceable* **intransigent,** *has been unusually productive of clichés lately:* **Constraint** *was used by President Carter six times in a single press conference, and interest in the Cuban Africa corps has revived* **quagmire, confrontation, mercenary** *and the big favorite,* **adventurism.** *In terrorism, shooting at victim's legs has been termed* **knee-capping.** *Not-so-good neighbors have become* **front-line states** *and* **rejectionists** *are finding acceptability.*

Other regions of government have had a lacklustre year, after the heyday of Watergate coinages. **Koreagate** *was derivative;* **clout** *has been replaced by* **juice,** *and* **The System** *is now* **the process.** *With the demise of Vietnamization, the* **-ize** *have had it, excepting only* **trivialize,** *of which much is being made.*

An appendage of government, the Washington press corps, has popularized **burned,** *to mean scooped or seriously embarrassed. In that* **community's** *subdivision of television, the most feared pejoration,* **controversial,** *has been replaced by* **abrasive.**

The formerly **beautiful people,** *once the* **jet set,** *now are called the* **glitterati,** *which appears to be a combination of literati, or illuminati, with a glittering generality.*

A SURPRISE SOURCE *of vogue words is the academic community. The "in" discipline is* **bioethics.** *The new title is* **Distinguished Professor** *of whatever, thereby imputing a lack of distinction to all other professors. Much thinking is described as* **seminal,** *and all wisdom—once "received"—is now* **perceived.**

This was not a big year for euphemisms. Political scientists unduly influenced by macro-economics started calling voters **microdecision-makers.** *"Basement" became a word to be shunned: Macy's offered its bargains in a new* **cellar,** *giving it a winey rather than a cheap tone, and hotels started calling their sub-basement and other dungeon space* **lower levels.** *Sometimes even euphemisms have euphemisms:* **Wetbacks** (*a derogation of Mexicans swimming the Rio Grande to slip into the United States*) *became* **illegal aliens,** *and are now referred to as* **undocumented persons.**

The rampant vogue term for "being in difficulty" **between a rock and a hard place**—*was traced by Merriam-Webster at the urgent plea of this lexicographer, who was in Big Trouble. An article in a 1921 issue of a Dialect Notes points to its origins in Arizona during the financial panics after World War I. The geologic phrase, suggesting an alternative harder than a rock, meant "bankruptcy," and is thus used with unwitting accuracy by NYC politicians. (A Washington Post editorial writer, flinching at the moment of truth, did not carry out his plan to entitle an article about Afghanistan "Between Iraq and a Hard Place.")*

CLEARLY, *the biggies of the World Mafia—with their abrasive lust for megabucks—have been burned by the speedy trivialization of the language by the glitterati. Only by tracking our bromides can wordaholics impose any kind of constraints and make our excellent lingo vogue-word free. Y'know what I'm saying.*

William Safire

in the INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

general, the Soviet legal record was incompatible with cooperation on a joint tribunal with our judges: we ourselves had had the experience of the fake Metro-Vic Trial of British engineers. (*Now*, of course, it is absolutely clear, even from Soviet sources, that "judges" of that period merely did what Party and Police told them; while in the case of Nikitchenko himself it has also been published that he sentenced a Soviet General to 15 years imprisonment on no evidence at all—the General having failed to confess under severe torture.)

(*2*) For a government to be represented in trying men for "aggressive war"—when that Government had itself been condemned, and expelled from the League of Nations, for precisely that offence only six years previously—was ostentatiously, farcically, inequitable.

(*3*) One of the charges against the accused was of having organised the Katyn Massacre. Even at the time there was plenty of evidence—from Neutrals, Allies, and others—that this crime was in fact committed by one of the accusers—to the degree, in fact, that the Court did not find the accused guilty of it, discreetly—but scandalously—avoiding all reference to it in the verdict. This proves more strongly than any other point the truth of Professor Watt's strictures on the defending lawyers. Unless incompetent or browbeaten, they could have used the issue with effect—as indeed they could have (1) and (2) above.

Of course, to say that the accused did not have a fair trial is not to suggest their innocence on a variety of frightful crimes. But it would have been better if they had been put before courts-martial for specific offences they had actually committed. One can hardly fault the attitude of the Soviet Union, which was fully in accord with its principles. It is the slippery and sanctimonious conduct of high representatives of British and American law which is so dreadful.

ROBERT CONQUEST

Hoover Institution
Stanford, California

AUTHORS

Mervyn Jones' most recent novel is *Today the Struggle* (Quartet Books).

Hyam Maccoby is Librarian of Leo Baeck College in London and is the author of *Revolution in Judaea* (Orbach & Chambers, 1973). Among his articles in ENCOUNTER are "Is the Political Jesus Dead?" (February 1976) and "Jesus on the Small Screen" (July 1977).

George MacBeth's latest work of fiction is *The Seven Witches* (W. H. Allen).

Peter Porter is a poet, critic, and broadcaster. *The Cost of Seriousness*, his most recent volume of poems, is published by Oxford University Press.

François Bondy is an editor of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and of *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich), to which he contributes a regular column on people and politics in Europe.

George Watson is a Fellow in English at St John's College, Cambridge, and editor of the *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1969–77). His most recent book is *Politics and Literature in Modern Britain* (Macmillan, 1977). "Fictions of Academe" was delivered this year at the University of East Anglia as the annual St John's College Cambridge lecture.

Malcolm Bradbury is Professor of American Literature, University of East Anglia. His latest novel is *The History Man* (Secker & Warburg, 1975; Arrow Books, 1978), and he is the editor of *The Novel Today*, published last year by Fontana and Manchester University Press. His two-part essay (the concluding section will appear in the January 1979 issue) is a revised version of a talk given at the National Gallery, London, in its "Words and Images" lecture series.

Roger Scruton is Lecturer in Philosophy at Birkbeck College, London, and is for this academic term Visiting Lecturer at Princeton University. He is the author of *Art and Imagination* (Methuen, 1974).

Alan Brownjohn is Lecturer in English at Battersea College of Education. His most recent volume of poems is *A Song of Good Life* (Secker, 1975).

Robert Melville has been Art Critic of the *New Statesman* and of *Architectural Review*. His books include *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawing* (Thames and Hudson, 1970) and *Erotic Art of the West* (Weidenfeld, 1973).

C. G. Strohm is a regular writer for *Die Welt* (Bonn) and an advisory editor of the Russian dissident review, *Kontinent*.

P. N. Furbank is Lecturer in English at the Open University. He is General Editor of the New Wessex Edition of Thomas Hardy's novels (Macmillan); the second volume of his *E. M. Forster: A Life* was published this year by Secker.

K. H. Janssen is an editor of *Die Zeit* in Hamburg. His article on "Hitler as Best-Seller" appeared in the January 1974 issue of ENCOUNTER.

WE ARE GRATEFUL to the *New Statesman* for permission to use the cartoon of Evelyn Waugh by **Vicky** which appeared in Philip Stratford's article "Evelyn Waugh and The Loved One" in our September issue.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED, IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

London

HELP!: The friendly little verb "to help" is being rapidly worsened so as to become distinctly unfriendly. For some time a man said to be "helping the police with their inquiries" has been understood not to be lending a hand to the hard-pressed police out of voluntary benevolence as a good citizen. The euphemism is taken to mean that he is being interrogated, his arrest imminent, and subsequent conviction probable.

Now the amiable little question "Can I help you?" shows alarming signs of acquiring an aggressive ring. Snarled in its now customary tone of voice it can be translated as "What the hell are you doing here? And can I help you out of here as quickly as possible?"

A similar deterioration is affecting "please". In many contexts and tones of voice it is now ruder to say please than to leave it out. Compare "Just a moment" and "Just a moment, please". The full "if you please" is even ruder.

These developments may be part of our fashionable modern horror of sounding patronizing, or even educated. At this rate it will not be long before "thank you" becomes an insult, and "sorry" a malediction. THE TIMES

Peking

COMRADE QUIXOTE: *King Juan Carlos of Spain became the first European monarch to visit Communist China when he arrived in Peking with Queen Sofia yesterday.*

A woman soloist in Chinese army uniform played two pieces including "Ritual Fire Dance," by the Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, which would have been banned during the radical years before 1976.

A Chinese Catholic priest from the only remaining Catholic church in Peking attended the banquet for the royal couple, and will celebrate mass for them tomorrow morning.

At the banquet in the Great Hall of the People, the couple were introduced to intellectuals and cultural figures, including actors, a mathematician, a once banned ballerina, and a man who translated "Don Quixote" into Chinese.

Vice-Chairman Teng Hsiao-ping, in a toast, recalled Chairman Mao's use of guerrilla warfare and acknowledged that "the term guerrilla itself is a Spanish creation." DAILY TELEGRAPH

East Berlin

FIGHTING WORDS: The language of the Communist functionaries in East Germany has been sharply criticised by the East Berlin weekly magazine, "Weltbühne", as formalistic, rhetorical, and unnecessarily high-falutin'. If every kind of personal get-together is immediately called a *"Kollektiv"* and every simple form of activity automatically becomes a "struggle" (*Kampf*), then the efforts on behalf of genuine collectivism and real struggle can only be harmfully reduced. The "Weltbühne" suggests judging men and movements less on the basis of speeches than of deeds. Too much of the praise given to the achievements of the DDR is empty exercises in lip-service, and behind the phraseology is only calculated bureaucratic careerism. FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

Peking

RATOPHOBIA: *The small irritants of life in Peking continue to give the foreign community something to talk about: the irrationality of the traffic police, the derelictions of napping lift-operators in the blocks of flats, the incurable rudeness of the attendants at one particular counter in the Friendship Store.*

The butt of many an anecdote is the Foreign Ministry's diplomatic service bureau, which has the unenviable task of keeping the foreigners and their families supplied with everything from gas cookers to chauffeurs.

The latest sin laid at the bureau's door is its inability to deal with the rodents sometimes seen in the flats. One diplomat, I learn, took a dead rat round to the bureau to support his complaint about infestation, and was received with a knowing smile and the comment: "Ah yes, a foreign rat."

THE TIMES

Bonn

WAR OF INITIALS: According to the "Society for the German Language", the use of the initials "BRD" to stand for the "Bundesrepublik Deutschland" is neither necessary nor advisable. The popular suspicion has been that it was a propaganda-laden short form employed by anti-Western propagandists of the East German Democratic Republic, known by the initials DDR.

An analysis of the West German press reveals that in contrast to the standard general usage of "Bundesrepublik" (70%), and some 20% for "Deutschland", there was only 0.5% for "BRD." Moreover, "BRD" was not an East German invention but could already be found in an official Bonn book of abbreviations of 1952. In any case, abbreviations should be avoided. DIE WELT

Boston

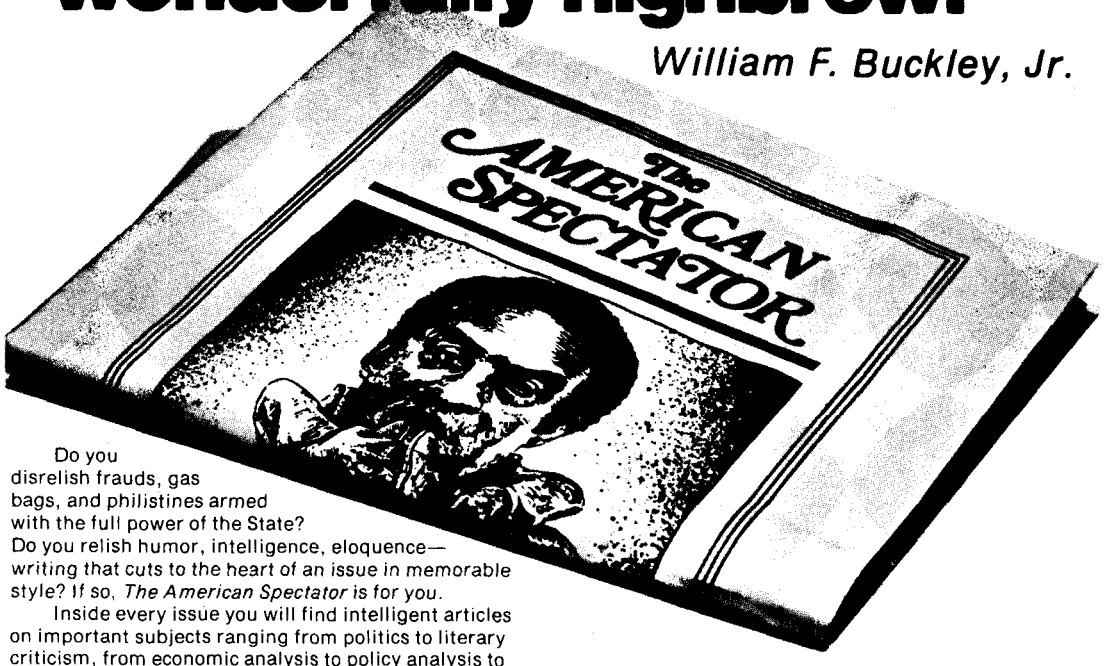
ACCENTS: *According to Alistair Cooke, the Masterpiece Theater's uniquitous host, the Japanese started the most recent Thomas Hardy revival and the rest of the world—especially British television—seems to have followed. Cult favourites, read most often as charming period (1830s) pieces, revealing the odd morality of another age, are coming back. The BBC series of "The Mayor of Casterbridge" turns out to be pure unadulterated soap opera. It has skilful acting by performers who play every scene as if it were Shakespeare. Alas, the major weakness lies in the difficulty of adjusting to regional accents spewed forth with great gusto, but often incomprehensible to the American ear.*

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Iconbusting, brawlingly staid, and wonderfully highbrow."

William F. Buckley, Jr.



Do you disrelish frauds, gas bags, and philistines armed with the full power of the State? Do you relish humor, intelligence, eloquence—writing that cuts to the heart of an issue in memorable style? If so, *The American Spectator* is for you.

Inside every issue you will find intelligent articles on important subjects ranging from politics to literary criticism, from economic analysis to policy analysis to film commentary.

Along with such serious articles you will find regular features and special articles that are guaranteed to make you laugh out loud. Each issue, for example, carries a full page of idiotic quotations gathered from the far corners of the Republic. Another page summarizes the latest monkeyshines perpetrated by the world's buffoons.

Our all-star lineup features not only well-known writers like Malcolm Muggeridge, Irving Kristol, and Milton Friedman, but also some of the most talented members of the rising young generation, for instance, editor R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., whose opinions *Time* magazine has said "are couched in some of the liveliest prose since the passing of H.L. Mencken."

So if you are wearied by those magazines that approach every issue with a sour face, you should consider *The American Spectator*. If you are also looking for a magazine that will render you thoughtful, then inflamed, *The American Spectator* is definitely for you.

To order a subscription just complete the coupon and send it to us with your check. Or—if you prefer—we can bill you.

Subscribe to a magazine that stirs the blood and engages the mind. Subscribe to *The American Spectator*.

"One of the most energetic and sprightly journals of opinion. . . If *The American Spectator* has a guiding philosophy, it is little more than a disgust for hypocrisy, utopian social engineering, and bad writing." —**Time**

"One of the liveliest, best written, best edited journals of ideas and politics we know." —**Baltimore Sun**

"One of the few magazines which dares to focus on both popular and terribly unpopular viewpoints. The result is a fascinating, intelligent, and totally readable approach to current affairs. It is highly recommended." —**Library Journal**

Formerly *The Alternative: An American Spectator*

The AMERICAN SPECTATOR
P.O. Box 877
Bloomington, Indiana 47401
U.S.A.

(Please print)

NAME

ADDRESS

COUNTRY

J8A

Yes, I'll try *The American Spectator*. Please enter a one-year subscription (twelve issues).

- ☐ Payment enclosed.
- ☐ Please send invoice.

- ☐ United States: $12

Outside United States:

- ☐ Surface mail: $13
- ☐ Air mail: $24

Please send U.S. dollars or equivalent.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED